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# CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

## PALESTINE AND TRANSJORDAN

### PART 1

January to December 1947

(Continued from

"Further Correspondence respecting Eastern Affairs," Part 67)



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the difficulty in Europe, proceeded to get the matter reopened and as a temporary proposal put forward that the continuing immigration of 1,500 a month should be accepted. Since that time we shall have admitted up to March approximately 24,000, and of course there has been some illegal immigration.

"We have sought earnestly to try to combine three proposals: (1) immigration; (2) land transfer; and (3) the ultimate setting up of an independent State based on the people resident in Palestine, whether Arab or Jew, and we have felt that this ought to offer a reasonable solution, or at least form the basis of discussion. For we are convinced that the country ought to reach an independent status soon and the mandatory Power yield up its responsibilities. This proposed solution, however, has been rejected by the Jews on the ground that it did not provide for unlimited immigration with the object not of relieving Europe alone, but the establishment of a Jewish State. They also put to us that they would be prepared to consider as a compromise a viable Jewish State in a part of the country, which is sometimes described as partition. But when we ascertained what they meant, it became clear that all that would be left to the Arabs would be a very small and rather desolate area in the hills. The Arabs rejected our proposed solution on the ground that it contemplated further immigration and they absolutely refused to accede to this principle. However, if our proposals had become a basis of discussion, it might have been possible in consultation with the Arab Governments to arrive at some *modus vivendi* which would have eased the situation. But we have failed to get the parties to agree on anything. His Majesty's Government therefore had to take a decision, and in view of the unsatisfactory nature of the working of the mandate and

the respective claims from the two parties (which are, I repeat: (1) the Arabs claim that there should be an independent State, resting on the franchise of the people, whether Arab or Jew, and that immigration should stop: (2) the Jews claim that a Jewish State should be established regardless of the opinion of the Arabs), we could only decide to refer the mandate back to the United Nations.

"4. We recognise that the peace and security of the Middle East is seriously involved, but for a considerable time His Majesty's Government have felt that with the pressure placed upon it the mandate has been made unworkable. Further, we have been unable to reconcile the views of the opposing sides and therefore our decision to place the matter on the agenda of the United Nations Assembly seemed to us to be the only course open. His Majesty's Government have also decided, while giving the United Nations Assembly all the information and all the documents relating to the schemes which have been put forward from time to time to solve this problem, not themselves to make any recommendation but to request the Assembly to consider the position and recommend a settlement."

5. I am sure General Marshall will appreciate the very critical situation with which the Palestine Administration will be confronted between now and September. Terrorism, threatened defiance of the law, illegal immigration represent very serious problems for us to face. It may be of course that the fact that the question has gone to the United Nations may have a restraining influence on both Arabs and Jews. Since, however, most of the support for these illegal acts comes from United States nationals, one can only hope that every effort will be made to restrain them in the interval.

E 1411/46/G

No. 3

### FAILURE OF THE LONDON CONFERENCE

*Mr. Bevin to His Majesty's representatives at Washington (No. 1523), Cairo (No. 366), Bagdad (No. 142), Beirut (No. 100), Damascus (No. 75), Jeddah (No. 77), Amman (No. 63), and British Middle East Office, Cairo (No. 164).*

Foreign Office,

15th February, 1947

My telegram No. 1392 to Washington of 12th February: London talks on Palestine.

Final meetings with Jewish Agency and Arab delegates were held on 13th and 14th February, and conference has come to an end.

2. At these meetings British delegation stated that His Majesty's Government had decided to refer Palestine problem to the United Nations. They would inform the United Nations of the history of the problem and put before them the various solutions suggested hitherto, without putting forward a recommendation in favour of any one solution.

3. It is the present intention to place the Palestine problem on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the United Nations Assembly in September.

4. An announcement will be made in Parliament, probably on 18th February, which will be followed by a request for a debate later in the week. We propose to publish a White Paper in advance of the debate containing—

- (a) the provincial autonomy plan, as described by Mr. Morrison in the House of Commons on 31st July, 1949 (with explanatory map).
- (a) The Arab proposals of September 1946, and
- (c) latest British proposals.

I understand that neither the Arab nor the Jewish representatives harbour any ill-feeling as a result of the failure of the discussions to reach an agreement, and that they appreciate in fact the necessity for referring the problem to the United Nations.

6. In winding up the conference with the Arabs I said that His Majesty's Government had sought earnestly and for a very long time to reach a solution of the problem. The proposals which we had last put forward offered, in our view, a reasonable solution and might well afford a basis for discussion. They contemplated an independent Palestine which was neither Arab nor Jew, but represented the people of the country. This solution had, however, been

rejected by both Arabs and Jews. His Majesty's Government were impressed by the unanimity with which both parties had rejected it. His Majesty's Government still had an interest in maintaining peace in the Middle East and it was still my hope that the problem would eventually be settled in a way which would contribute to the peace and security of the Middle East.

7. Great Britain maintained her desire for friendship with the Arab countries. We could not contemplate the use of force against them, and the aim and objective of His Majesty's Government was to co-operate with all the Arab States to ensure peaceful development. I hoped that the Arab delegates would leave London with a statesmanlike determination not to lose any opportunity of reaching a solution if the situation changed in the meanwhile.

8. We had held the Palestine Mandate for twenty-five years and we believed that our achievements for that period had been for the benefit of the country. I did not despair now that a solution might be reached. Nor did I despair that Palestine could still afford a home for more of the victims of German aggression without endangering the Arabs. I asked that the Arab Governments should apply their minds to the question whether the problem could not be solved between now and the time when the matter was brought before the United Nations.

(To Arab States only).

9. In communicating the decision of His Majesty's Government to refer the matter to the United Nations you should speak to the Government to which you are accredited in general sense of the foregoing. You should also inform the Governments that this is a case for good statesmanship, and if a solution can be reached and peace at the same time be preserved, that is a prize worth striving for.

E 1534/2/31

No. 4

### PALESTINE: STATEMENT BY THE RIGHT HON. ERNEST BEVIN, M.P., IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON 18th FEBRUARY, 1947

I am very sorry to have to inform the House that the conference with the Arabs and the consultations with the Zionist Organisation about the future of Palestine which have been proceeding in London have come to an end because it has become clear that there is no prospect of reaching by this means any settlement which would

be even broadly acceptable to the two communities in Palestine.

Ever since they took office the Government have laboured incessantly to find a solution of the Palestine problem. Most members on this side of the House believed that no solution was to be found along the lines of the White Paper of 1939; and the

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Government therefore addressed themselves at once to the task of devising a different approach on which they could negotiate with the parties concerned. In view of the keen interest shown by American Jewry in the aspirations of Zionism, it was thought desirable that the Government of the United States should be associated with this endeavour; and as a result the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry was appointed in November 1945. At the same time it was decided that Jewish immigration into Palestine should be temporarily continued at the rate of 1,500 a month notwithstanding the limit set by the White Paper, and an additional 21,000 Jews have already been admitted. Since July 1945 29,000 have been admitted. When the report of the Anglo-American Committee was received, we agreed with the United States Government that it should be examined by British and American officials. They jointly recommended the plan of Provincial Autonomy, which was described in this House by my right honourable friend the Lord President of the Council on 31st July, 1946. This plan gave us a basis for negotiation with the parties concerned; and no time was lost in inviting them to confer with us. Neither of the two communities in Palestine accepted this invitation, but a conference with representatives of the Arab States was opened in London in September of last year. After an adjournment due to the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the conference was resumed in January, the Palestine Arabs then joining in the discussions. The Jewish Agency have throughout refused to participate in the conference although informed that all proposals would be open for discussion, but it has been possible in this last phase to have conversations on an informal basis with representatives of the Agency.

From the outset both Arabs and Jews declined to accept as a basis for discussion the Provincial Autonomy plan put forward by His Majesty's Government. The Arabs put forward an alternative proposal under which Palestine would achieve early independence as a unitary State with a permanent Arab majority. His Majesty's Government, seeing no prospect of negotiating a settlement on that basis, put forward new proposals of their own. These envisaged the establishment of local areas, Arab and Jewish, with a substantial degree of autonomy within a unitary State, with a central Government in which both Arabs

and Jews would share. These proposals provided that Jewish immigrants should be admitted over the next two years at the rate of 4,000 a month, and that thereafter the continuance and rate of Jewish immigration should be determined, with due regard to economic absorptive capacity, by the High Commissioner in consultation with his Advisory Council, or in the event of disagreement by an Arbitration Tribunal appointed by the United Nations. This plan, while consistent with the principles of the mandate, added an element which has hitherto been lacking in our administration of Palestine, namely, a practical promise of evolution towards independence by building up, during a five-year period of trusteeship, political institutions rooted in the lives of the people. It was offered as a basis of discussion.

These three solutions have already been made known in broad outline, and we intend to lay before the House later in the week a White Paper describing each of them in greater detail.

The latest proposals of His Majesty's Government were rejected outright by both the Arab delegations and the representatives of the Jewish Agency, even as a basis for discussion. I think it important that the House should understand clearly the reasons which prompted the two sides to reject this solution. For the Arabs the fundamental point is that Palestine should no longer be denied the independence which has now been attained by every other Arab State; and that, in accordance with the accepted principles of democracy, the elected majority should be free to determine the future destiny of the country. They regard the further expansion of the Jewish National Home as jeopardising the attainment of national independence by the Arabs of Palestine, which all Arab States desire; and they are therefore unwilling to contemplate further Jewish immigration into Palestine. They are equally opposed to the creation of a Jewish State in any part of Palestine.

The Jewish Agency, on the other hand, have made it clear that their fundamental aim is the creation of an independent Jewish State in Palestine. With this in view they first proposed that His Majesty's Government should continue to administer the mandate on a basis which would enable them to continue to expand the Jewish National Home until such time as they had attained by immigration a numerical majority in Palestine and could demand

the creation of an independent Jewish State over the country as a whole. When it was made clear that His Majesty's Government were unable to maintain in Palestine a mandatory Administration under the protection of which such a policy could be carried out, the representatives of the Jewish Agency indicated that, while still maintaining the justice of their full claim, they would be prepared to consider as a compromise proposals for the creation of "a viable Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine." While they were not themselves willing to propose a plan of partition, they were prepared to consider such a proposal if advanced by His Majesty's Government.

His Majesty's Government have thus been faced with an irreconcilable conflict of principles. There are in Palestine about 1,200,000 Arabs and 600,000 Jews. For the Jews, the essential point of principle is the creation of a sovereign Jewish State. For the Arabs, the essential point of principle is to resist to the last the establishment of Jewish sovereignty in any part of Palestine. The discussions of the last month have clearly shown that there is no prospect of resolving this conflict by any settlement negotiated between the parties. But if the conflict has to be resolved by an arbitrary decision, that is not a decision which His Majesty's Government are empowered, as mandatory, to take. His Majesty's Government have of themselves no power, under the terms of the mandate, to award the country either to the Arabs or to the Jews, or even to partition it between them.

It is in these circumstances that we have decided that we are unable either to accept

the scheme put forward by the Arabs or by the Jews, or to impose ourselves a solution of our own. We have therefore reached the conclusion that the only course now open to us is to submit the problem to the judgment of the United Nations. We intend to place before them an historical account of the way in which His Majesty's Government have discharged their trust in Palestine over the last twenty-five years. We shall explain that the mandate has proved to be unworkable in practice and that the obligations undertaken to the two communities in Palestine have been shown to be irreconcilable. We shall describe the various proposals which have been put forward for dealing with the situation, namely, the Arab plan, Zionist aspirations so far as we have been able to ascertain them, the proposals of the Anglo-American Committee and the various proposals which we ourselves have put forward. We shall then ask the United Nations to consider our report and to recommend a settlement of the problem. We do not ourselves intend to recommend any particular solution.

Though we shall give immediate notice of our intentions, we see great difficulty in having this matter considered by the United Nations before the next regular session of the General Assembly in September. We regret that the final settlement should be subject to this further delay, particularly in view of the continuing strain on the British Administration and services during this further period. We trust, however, that, as the question is now to be referred to the United Nations, all concerned will exercise restraint until their judgment is known.

E 1728/46/31

No. 5

### PALESTINE (GOVERNMENT POLICY)

*Extract from House of Commons Debates, 25th February, 1947*

*The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Ernest Bevin):* The course of events has led His Majesty's Government to decide that the problem of Palestine must be referred to the United Nations, as outlined in the announcement which I made to the House last week. The problem of Palestine is a very vexed and complex one. There is no denying the fact that the mandate contained contradictory promises. In the first place it promised the Jews a National Home and, in the second place,

it declared that the rights and position of the Arabs must be protected. Therefore, it provided for what was virtually an invasion of the country by thousands of immigrants, and at the same time said that this was not to disturb the people in possession. The question therefore arose whether this could be accomplished without a conflict, and events in the last twenty-five years have proved that it could not.

The Jews set about colonising and there is no doubt that, in the sphere they have



developed, they have carried out some very great experiments. Many of the Arabs, as I shall explain later, are involved in those developments, such as citrus growing, which is vital to the economy of Palestine. As far as Jewish development is concerned, everybody in this country who has been associated with the affair, certainly up to 1931, assumed that it was a National Home for the Jews about which we were talking. I want to remind the House, however, that this is not the issue now. All that is over. The issue which the United Nations must consider and decide is, first, shall the claims of the Jews that Palestine is to be a Jewish State be admitted; second, shall the claim of the Arabs that it is to be an Arab State, with safeguards for the Jews under the decision for a National Home be admitted; or, third, shall it be a Palestinian State, in which the interests of both communities are as carefully balanced and protected as possible? I have put it in that form because in all negotiations I have had to conduct, and whatever proposals we have adopted to-day, I come back every time to these three provisions. I cannot escape them and I do not think anyone who has been Colonial Secretary who has handled this problem hitherto, however much it has been argued, has escaped them.

That, therefore, raises the issue which has got to be decided and we, as Mandatory Power, cannot solve that problem until the United Nations have recommended which of these three alternatives is to form the basis of the future organisation of Palestine. We, as Mandatory Power, have no power to make that decision. Nothing that I can find in any of the documents, either at the League of Nations, or in the discussions between the Great Powers at Versailles and after, indicate that we have that power. The mandate certainly does not give it, and the Anglo-American Committee, faced with the problem that we have been faced with, came to the view not to recommend a Jewish State, and everybody who has touched the Palestine question is forced back to that every time. I really want the House to face up to this problem which His Majesty's Government have to face up to now. In our recent negotiations the Colonial Secretary and I, over and over again, came up against this fundamental problem. All the proposals we have made for the gradual evolution of Palestine towards independence have been judged by the Arabs and the Jews according to the effect they might have on the final

decision as to the kind of State Palestine is to be when it becomes independent, and independent it must become. The Mandatory Power cannot go on for ever.

Let me trace the history of this business since we came into office. We gave early consideration to the problem and discussed the matter very fully. I do not escape the fact—I do not desire to escape it—that when I was a member of the Coalition Government with right hon. gentlemen opposite I took my corner in trying to see what solution we could find for Palestine. I have a perfectly open mind about it. All I want is a settlement, and I want a settlement because it is one of those sore spots in the Middle East that may, if not settled, lead to much wider trouble—[hon. members: “Hear, hear”]. Various schemes have been evolved in the past, including partition, but all of them which have come before me, whether in the Coalition Government or in this Government, would have to be put into operation by force. That is to say, everybody came to the conclusion that we should not get agreement, but that we would have to come to a decision and then apply force to put it into operation.

His Majesty's Government, after reviewing the situation, came to the conclusion, rightly or wrongly, that after all the force we had seen throughout the world in the last twenty-five years, force applied to this problem would not produce a final solution, and might create wider difficulties in the Middle East, and might, indeed, start us on a road leading in another quarter of a century to another war. That we have had to face, having regard to the importance to the world economy of the raw materials and the whole position of the Middle East. We therefore proceeded, not too hopefully, but with the conviction that it was our duty, to make the effort to try to get a negotiated settlement. To begin with, and I want to make this very clear, we agreed that we could not enforce the White Paper of 1939 as a basis for our policy. It has been suggested that all that was needed was to tear up the White Paper. This raises a very serious question in international affairs, one that cannot be approached lightly. Statements have often been made in this House and outside, when Labour was in Opposition, that they would not be bound by that decision of the Government of the day. But there are many precedents.

It has always been accepted, in international affairs at least, that the party coming into office after making such a declaration does not just tear up existing undertakings, but seeks to change them by proper negotiation and by substituting another policy. I have to emphasise this because this House of Commons did vote for the White Paper. It is true that the Mandates Commission did not endorse it—

*Mr. Clement Davies* (Montgomery): Not this House—a predecessor.

*Mr. Bevin*: I always regard this House as continuing from eternity to eternity, and I meant it in that sense. I think I am right—[hon. members: “Hear, hear”]. I did not mean the actual members of this House. What I meant was that the House in 1939 did, in fact, vote—and the Arabs took that as a decision of the British Parliament—[*Interruption*]. I must say that I should be reluctant to remain Foreign Secretary for five minutes, if I thought that I might go to an international conference with a vote of a majority of this House and give undertakings, and that those undertakings were going to be torn up without proper negotiations at the end—

*Mr. Sydney Silverman* (Nelson and Colne): Would my right hon. friend say that the White Paper of 1939 represents any kind of agreement or undertaking with any other Power with whom we were in international relations? Was it not merely a declaration of policy by the Mandatory Power?

*Mr. Bevin*: It was regarded by the Arab States at that conference as an undertaking by the British Parliament and one which would be carried out. May I suggest—[*Interruption*]. Please do not interrupt. We are dealing with one of the most serious problems. I suggest to my hon. friend that if the vote had been the reverse way, and an undertaking of an inverse character had been given to the Jews, the hon. member would have been on his feet and said that this was a vote from the House, and that we could not tear it up. Really, I must stand for this as a point of principle, because all my negotiations of any kind with Foreign Powers depend on the integrity of a vote of this House of Commons—

*Mr. Turner-Samuels* (Gloucester): If that is right, how can the Foreign Secretary reconcile that with the statement of

the Prime Minister on 1st July last year in which he said:—

“The Government have never stood by the White Paper policy . . . . It is quite wrong to say that we are carrying on the White Paper policy.”—[Official Report, 1st July, 1946; Vol. 424, c. 1907].

*Mr. Bevin*: That is quite right, and if the hon. and learned member will wait a moment, I will show him why. The point I am making is this—and really I must ask the House, whether it is my party or any party, to support me in this because it is fundamental—I am going away next week to Moscow, and when I go to Moscow I shall be asked to give undertakings. When I arrive at conclusions, I shall have to say they are subject to the ratification of the House of Commons, and when that ratification of the House takes place—whatever the vote is—and an undertaking is given, I assume that whatever party succeeds us, whatever its political colour may be, it will honour that undertaking until it negotiates a change. I must ask my hon. friends to accept that; otherwise they ought never to send me to an international conference at all for any purpose. Really I have to state this, because it is fundamental to the carrying on of the business of the country. This is not a question of continuity of policy, but a question of keeping one's word, and, indeed, if there is one thing I have grown up in, not merely as a politician but as a trade union leader, it is that I have kept my word, whatever the opposition may have been.

Therefore, I told the Arabs quite straight that my party had declared that they could not be bound by this, and that a change must be negotiated, and I have proceeded on that policy with my right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary ever since. I think that is a perfectly legitimate action to take. Thereupon, the present question arose; what should the approach be? The position had become accentuated by the European situation and I thought, with the then Colonial Secretary, that the first step which should be taken should be—and I agree with the right hon. gentleman who corrected me the other night about the date—was to decide about immigration. The question was, should immigration come to an end at 31st December, 1945? I communicated with the Arabs and told them that I thought it should not. My right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary in his Department,



took it up with the Arabs in Palestine—I dealt with the Arab States—and we agreed that it should continue at 1,500 a month. I will not say, and it would be wrong of me to say, that there was an agreement by the Arabs to do that, but there was at least acquiescence, and on that acquiescence in a friendly way we proceeded to issue certificates at 1,500 a month.

Since we took that decision in December of 1945, 21,000 Jewish immigrants have entered Palestine over and above the 75,000 for whom the White Paper provided and immigration now is proceeding at the rate of 18,000 a year. There seems to be an impression everywhere that this is an abnormally low rate of entry, but the fact is that it has only been exceeded five times in the whole history of the Mandate—in 1925, and in the first four years of the Nazi rule in Germany. In other words, 18,000 a year is above the average for the whole mandatory period and I must say that I felt, having moved up to that as the first step in the opening of negotiations, it was not a bad rate of entry. But I think we might have been able to do more for the Jews, and have increased this rate at that time, if the bitterness of feeling which surrounds this problem of immigration had not been increased by American pressure for the immediate admission of 100,000. I do not desire to create any ill feeling with the United States; in fact, I have done all I can to promote the best possible relations with them, as with other countries, but I should have been happier if they had had regard to the fact that we were the mandatory Power, and that we were carrying the responsibility—[hon. members: "Hear, hear."].—and if they had only waited to ask us what we were doing. Then we could have informed them. But, instead of that, a person named Earl Harrison went out to their zone in Germany collecting certain information, and a report was issued. I must say it really destroyed the basis of good feeling that we—the Colonial Secretary and I—were endeavouring to produce in the Arab States, and it set the whole thing back.

However we realised that we had to take American interest in this problem into account. Accordingly, having regard to what they had said, we invited them to join us in forming the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. Now I must point out that I have been very severely criticised by people in the United States for not accepting the committee's report. I was reminded of this when I was over there

recently almost every day. But none of the report was accepted by the United States except one point, namely, the admission of 100,000 immigrants. I was perfectly willing to stand up to the problem of the report as a whole, which included ten points. I have never gone back on that, but even if I had, as events have turned out, it would not have settled the Palestine problem, as I shall show before I sit down. We could not undertake this, except as a part of the general settlement, and we had to continue our efforts to work out policy.

Our first attempt resulted in the plan for provincial autonomy. I must remind the House that the Anglo-American Committee reported against a Jewish State. Therefore, taking the report as a basis, we put forward this provincial autonomy plan as a basis for negotiation. We did not lay it down but, if I may say so, if other countries with different races and different religions, can work on the cantonal principle, I really cannot see why it cannot work in Palestine as elsewhere. We then tried to convene a conference of both Arabs and Jews. We tried very hard to get the Jews into the conference. I interviewed their representatives in Paris, in London, and I tried to persuade them, to the best of my ability to come in and face the issue with us.

I profoundly regret they did not. [hon. members: "Hear, hear."] I know—and I do not want to set one section of Jews against another—that those who have been trained in England and grown up under English customs and practice, wanted to come in, but the Jewish Agency, very largely dominated by New York, would not really come in, and it was with gentlemen from there that I had to deal so much. They would not join the conference unless, as a prerequisite, we would more or less commit ourselves to a Jewish State in advance, either partition or as a whole. How could I? I had to consult Arabs, I had to discuss the whole problem, and how could any representative of His Majesty's Government give an advance declaration one way or the other? However, we did agree to put any plan which the Jewish Agency cared to submit on the agenda, and to examine it on its merits whatever it involved.

The proposal I put to them was, "Here is the British plan. There is the Arab plan"—which by then had been drawn up—"You have your plan. Let us take these three plans, and see if, out of them, we can produce a solution." I knew from

experience that I could not get them in the same room. That, too, I think is regrettable when you have a problem of this character to solve. And in this case it was the Arabs who were the greatest difficulty. I want to make a balanced statement on this, quite fairly. They argued that experience of the past was not helpful, but the Jews were willing if I would accept the Jewish State, in some form, in advance. I could not do that, so they did not come into the conference. Neither could I get them into one room.

I did reach a stage, however, in meeting the Jews separately, in which I advanced the idea of an interim arrangement, leading ultimately to self-government. I indicated that I did not mind whether this interim arrangement was for five years, or 10 years, or three years, or whatever it was, I said to them, "If you will work together for three, five, or 10 years, it might well be that you will not want to separate. Let us try to make up the difference." At that stage things looked more hopeful. There was a feeling—I do not think I over-estimated it—when they left me in the Foreign Office that day, that I had the right approach at last. But what happened? I went back to the Paris Peace Conference, and next day—I believe it was the Day of Atonement, or a special day of the Jewish religion, I forget which—my right hon. friend the Prime Minister telephoned me at midnight, and told me that the President of the United States was going to issue another statement on the 100,000. I think the country and the world ought to know about this.

I went next morning to the Secretary of State, Mr. Byrnes, and told him how far I had got the day before. I believed we were on the road, if only they would leave us alone. I begged that the statement be not issued, but I was told that if it was not issued by Mr. Truman, a competitive statement would be issued by Mr. Dewey. In international affairs I cannot settle things if my problem is made the subject of local elections. I hope I am not saying anything to cause bad feeling with the United States, but I feel so intensely about this. A vexed problem like this, with a thousand years of religious differences, has to be handled with the greatest detail and care. No one knows that more than I do. I have seen these tense religious struggles in parts of this country, in Ireland, and elsewhere. I know what it involves. It can lead to civil war before you know where you are. However, the

statement was issued. I was dealing with Jewish representatives at the time, and I had to call it off because the whole thing was spoilt.

One thing is clear. I had to open the conference with the Arabs alone, and they put the point to me that they wanted finality. They wanted to determine what the future of Palestine is to be. The Jews also want finality, provided it takes the form of a Jewish State. But they would be prepared to see British rule continued as a protecting Power, provided it was clearly aiming at a Jewish Sovereign State. The conference was suspended at that time. The United Nations was meeting in New York. I thought that by going to New York, I could talk to a lot of people, and try to help the thing along by meeting people, and so on. While there I discussed the matter with the Secretary of State, Mr. Byrnes, and at the end, he made a public statement saying that the basis upon which Great Britain was proposing to hold the conference, in his view merited the attendance of the Jews as well as the Arabs. Even that, from America, produced no results.

Then came the second session of the conference with the Arabs. In view of the difficulty, we agreed to have informal talks with the Jewish Agency. We did not press them to come into the conference. I have been too long a negotiator to stand on form. I thought it was better, if they could not see their way clear to come into the conference, that I should meet them informally, and see whether, with my colleagues, I could get over this difficulty. When we met, the Arabs adhered to their plan for a unitary independent State in Palestine. They have reiterated at every meeting that they have never accepted the Palestine Mandate, nor recognised the legality of the Balfour Declaration. Nevertheless, they told us they were willing to recognise the results of this policy so far as the present residents in Palestine are concerned. These included about 600,000 Jews, now nearer 700,000 I am told, already living in Palestine with 1,200,000 Arabs.

I say this in all seriousness. If it were only a question of relieving Europe of 100,000 Jews, I believe a settlement could be found. I believe a settlement can now be found if it is purely the humanitarian problem I have to solve. Unfortunately, that is not the position. From the Zionist point of view the 100,000 is only a beginning, and the Jewish Agency talk in terms



of millions. I think the Arabs could be persuaded to agree to 100,000 new immigrants, in an orderly way, on humanitarian grounds, having regard to the European situation if—and I emphasise this—immigration after that, was to be determined by the elected representatives of the people of Palestine.

The claim made by the Arabs is a very difficult one to answer. Here, we in Great Britain as a House of Commons determine whether the people shall be admitted into this country or not. No one else is doing that. Why should an external agency, largely financed from America, determine how many people should come into Palestine, and interfere with the economy of the Arabs, who have been there for 2,000 years? This is what I have to face. There may be an answer to it, if it is on the merits of how long the respective parties have owned the country. But, the Arabs say they are not going to be pushed out, by an external agency, from a country which they regard as their own—I am using their words—and in which they have been living for just about as long as England has been a Christian country. That is what the House has to face, and it is a difficult thing to answer. I do not know what would happen if there were a lot of Welshmen in America and they tried to drive the Englishmen out. There would have to be a buffer State. The difficulty would be no doubt intense. Under the Arab plan the Jewish National Home—and they now accept the National Home—although they did not accept the Balfour Declaration or the mandate, they will accept the National Home—

*Mr. Kenneth Lindsay* (Combined English Universities): Does that also mean partition?

*Mr. Bevin*: No. I will deal with partition in a moment. But they accept the Home within a unitary State. That gives an Arab majority. I have argued with both Jews and Arabs. What is it we have got to solve? Are the Jews a State or are they a religion? I have got to face the question of Catholics, Mahomedans and everybody else, and really, this is a difficult thing to decide. I cannot believe that if there is a unitary State in Palestine every Arab will vote for an Arab candidate—he may in the first instance—or that every Jew will vote for a Jewish candidate. Almost the only constituency in this country which returned a Com-

munist candidate was Mile End and their member is not exactly a Zionist, and they have a perfect right to do so. No one is elected to this House either as a Jew or a Christian. One is elected as a man, as a representative. Therefore, one will have Communists, one will have Socialists, and it depends on the intelligence of the people whether there will be Conservatives. It may be that there will be some liberalism, even in Palestine. There is no doubt that people will form views which will crystallise. Therefore, the Arabs argue, "Leave it to the intelligence of the people who live in the State."

*Mr. S. Silverman*: Will my right hon. friend explain to the House exactly what he understands by the word "National" in the phrase "Jewish National Home"?

*Mr. Bevin*: I am sorry that I cannot give an accurate definition, and Balfour is dead. I do not say that unkindly, but whether anyone can explain what people meant at the time, I do not know. When I used it, there was an understanding on the part of the Arabs that in Palestine, in view of certain historical associations, those Jews who had migrated there should have their liberty and freedom—no pogroms, no persecution—and be equal citizens of the State. That makes it a national home—[*interruption*]. My national home is in England, with the same conditions.

*Mr. Turner-Samuels* (Gloucester): My right hon. friend says that the Arabs are prepared to accept the National Home. If he does not know what that is, and cannot give a definition of it, what is the good of telling the House that the Arabs are prepared to accept it?

*Mr. Bevin*: Because they agreed in their plan—hon. members have it before them—that "You can have your own language, your own university, your own religion, everything"—[*interruption*]. My hon. friend says, "Very kind of them," but if other countries that persecuted Jews had only given them that, there would never have been a problem.

*Mr. Lipsom* (Cheltenham): It is the people who matter.

*Mr. Bevin*: It is human rights which are the basis of the United Nations, and in the proposals, which I thought were perhaps too limited—I did not accept them—they were fundamental principles which I thought gave effect to what I

understood to be the basis of the claim originally made by Nathan Rothschild and other people—I have read all the papers—in the original discussions.

I want to put the other side. The Jews say that if that is done they will be tolerated as a minority. I cannot alter the balance of people in a State—that is impossible—any more than one can alter it between Nehru and Jinnah to-day in India. The numbers are there, and one cannot alter it in any country. Then we tried our hand at another plan. Members will have seen it in the White Paper. The plan had certain features common to the Anglo-American report and the provincial Autonomy Plan. From the Arab point of view, those proposals had the advantage that they placed in Arab hands the maintenance of existing safeguards against the dispossession of Arab cultivators, and at the end of two years they would have given the Arabs a voice in determining the rate of immigration. We propose to set up a Governor's Council, and in two years—and this was not based on anything but humanitarian principles—96,000 people would have been allowed from Europe, without any question of economic absorptive capacity. That was the proposal. Afterwards, the High Commissioner was to consult a council of both Jews and Arabs, and after consulting them he was to decide, on the basis of economic absorptive capacity, incorporating the words of the right hon. Member for Woodford (Mr. Churchill), which he included in the 1922 White Paper.

*Mr. Janner* (Leicester, West): Will my right hon. friend permit me to ask one question, a rather important one. What is the proposal with regard to the fulfilment of the provisions in the Mandate about the Jewish Agency, which is recognised as an international body?

*Mr. Bevin*: I will come to that, but my hon. friend is delaying my statement, and I hope that I shall be allowed to proceed. We proposed that if the High Commissioner's decision was not accepted by either party, the Secretary-General of the United Nations would appoint an arbitration tribunal, and we, as the Mandatory Power, would abide by the result. Was that not reasonable? What was the answer? It was that that proposal was rejected because we proposed that the Arabs should be consulted at all. Really, His Majesty's Government could not accept a position in which one was

going to admit people into a country, and representatives of the people living in it must not be consulted. That was really too tall an order, and I could not, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, accept that. I am saying this because I am leading up to the point where I shall say, at the end, that there is a chance of a settlement yet, without going to the United Nations, if people will come off their arbitrary positions. I am still open to try.

Then the other difficulty was that the present Government has no roots in the people at all. It is an alien Government imposed on the top by a Mandatory Government. I do not know what previous people who held the office of Colonial Secretary had in their minds, but I am perfectly sure in the discussion of this problem during the five years when I was in the Coalition Government it was never intended that we should be a Mandatory Power for ever. It was intended to lead to something and that the regulation of our relationship with Palestine should, in the end, be on a treaty basis and not a mandatory basis. That is as I understood it, and I believe that there is agreement on that. Therefore, I thought it would be a good thing. Suggestions have been put to me over and over again by hon. members of this House and by members of another place, "Why not try to establish a British dominion to try to solve the problem?" But really it is too late for that.

The Trusteeship Council has been established and there is no other road but the establishment of a trusteeship leading to independence from a mandatory position, unless we get agreement between the parties, and there was no chance of agreement. Therefore, we proposed a trusteeship for five years—for two years with 96,000 immigrants, and arbitration after that on the question of the economic absorptive capacity—and that we should begin at once by creating municipal areas in certain parts of Palestine which would have Jewish majorities and others which would have Arab majorities. In order to achieve that, we designed our plans to give the Jews the benefit of Tel Aviv. It is not realised that 78 per cent. of the Jews live in Tel Aviv and the balance are on the land. It is sometimes assumed that they are all on the land. That is not true. They are an urban population.

*Mr. Oliver Stanley* (Bristol, West): The right hon. gentleman said that 78 per



cent. live in Tel Aviv. I do not think he meant that. I think he meant that they live in urban districts.

*Mr. Bevin:* I beg pardon. They live in urban areas. Taking the Tel Aviv population with that of other urban areas we have this majority of 78 per cent. It is quite clear that the police for the maintenance of order have no roots in the place. We suggested devising a police system like our own which would be partly central and partly municipal in the respective areas. It would be recruited in a way similar to that of Birmingham, or any other local government area in this country. This was suggested so as to begin building up a Government with roots in the people, ready to hand over. After four years, we suggested a constituent assembly which should endeavour to work out a Constitution. If they could not succeed—this is not British territory; we hold it under trust—we would return to the United Nations and ask for their help and advice. We felt that if we could begin self-government, begin getting people to work together, it would help to solve the problem. I am convinced that if the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine—I emphasise in Palestine—are given a chance to work together, they will work together and solve this problem, but if it is to be settled in accordance with the Jewish Agency's dictates, it will never be settled. I am speaking, I hope, impartially.

*Mr. Janner:* With the greatest respect—

*Hon. Members:* Order.

*Mr. Bevin:* I have given way many times. In the Citrus Board, in the trade boards and the various boards of commerce, they do work together. If they can work together in trade and commerce in that way, personally I am convinced that if given the chance and removed from political difficulty, then the Jews and Arabs will develop a State of which they can well be proud. That is my view, and I am entitled to my view after all these negotiations. We have been compelled to maintain a Government with which the people, as I say, have not been sufficiently associated. We, therefore, tried a new method. It was rejected.

In the other States of the Middle East where we also had a mandate, it has led to self-government—in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq

and all the rest. I want to suggest that the cultural development of the Arabs and Jews in Palestine is of as high a standard as the cultural development and aptitude for government to be found in any other Arab States. That being so, we rather pinned our faith on developing independence in that way. If this policy was expressed in connexion with any other place in the world, I believe this House, the United Nations, and everybody else, would say that our policy was right in that we were aiming for independence, getting rid of the mandate and developing self-government and self-determination with proper protection for the rights of any minorities. That has been our policy and I think if this was not Palestine it would have been successful.

I was asked a question about defining the National Home. This has been a great puzzle to me. When the Balfour Declaration and the subsequent mandate were made, nobody indicated, as far as I can discover, when the National Home would be established. I cannot find it anywhere. Was it millions of Jews; was it a majority; was it a Jewish State, or what was it? The only expression that I can find is this vague expression of a "Jewish National Home." I know the reason for this declaration. I know why it was made, but I do not believe it would help the discussion now. It was thought by most people prior to 1939, that the steps that had been taken up to date, did really fulfil the Balfour Declaration. Between the Labour Party and the party then in office a great dispute was carried on in this House. But, frankly, the more one reads the documents, the more difficult it is to find any guide as to when a Jewish National Home has been completed or established. It was for that reason that we thought if we developed these municipal areas, if we transferred the land regulations, the laws and the police, and all this kind of thing, to majorities in that area, we should have established in fact the National Home. We should have established the National Home within a unitary State, with a free chance to the Jews for their own development, which would have allowed them in the joint Parliament of Arabs and Jews, to have had their say in the affairs of the world.

That leads me to another point, which is another very difficult one. It is said that, if we have a unitary State, the Jews, as Jews, will not be in the United Nations. Really, this is raising a very

big question. Are we in the United Nations as a religion, are we in the United Nations as a people geographically situated, or how are we in it? If the United Nations is to arrive at a position in which it will have five or six great religions as dominant factors, then that will be a very disturbing situation, and, as far as I am concerned, at any rate—

*Mr. Turner-Samuels (Gloucester) rose—*

*Mr. Bevin:* I have given way very often already, and the hon. and learned Gentleman will have his turn. I must raise this issue, because really it is fundamental. I have to deal with the points put to me by the Jewish Agency, and the Jewish Agency says that, "as nationals, but not as Jews, we shall be in the United Nations." I never knew, and I never thought, that we had promised or done anything to establish a situation of that character, but, if that is the case, let us do it with our eyes open. This is one of the difficulties which I see, and I say this because I want both the Jews and the Arabs to reconsider their position. We are united in the United Nations to-day as States, and, within every State of the United Nations, there are any number of religions. It may be different, but that is the situation that is put to me, and I hope it will be debated and brought out, because it does raise a very serious question, especially for a Commonwealth like this, which represents every possible phase of people in the world. We cannot divide ourselves like that.

Therefore, I have asked, over and over again, if it will not be possible to have a Palestinian State, and with the ability that is there—the business ability, and it is exceptional and has done remarkably well, the statesmanship and the aptitude for government—cannot we find a place through a Palestinian State to deal with these problems in the United Nations from a State point of view? That is the question which I should like debated in the course of this debate, because it is the issue upon which the whole crux of this settlement really depends. I hope it will not be dealt with in any spirit of prejudice, because we have to face these issues, and because, when we go to the United Nations next September, these are the issues which I suggest are going to come before us. Take the position of Russia. I do not know how many races there are in that great territory, covering one-seventh of the globe, but it is colossal,

and I have never heard that this particular theory has been advanced there. Therefore, I ask for consideration of this problem.

May I now just turn to the question of partition? A good many people have said that the way out of the difficulty is to have partition. I am sure that, if we have agreed to partition, we would have had a tremendous row as to where the frontier should be. We have drawn frontiers in the Provincial Autonomy Plan; I have seen the Jewish idea of partition in an American paper, but we really cannot make two viable States of Palestine, however we may try we cannot do it. We can make one viable State, and, so far as I can see, or as far as any student of the map could see, the only thing we could do would be to transfer the rest nearer to one of the Arab States, but I ask what trouble is that going to cause in the whole of the Arab world? That will set going a conflict which will be worse than the conflict we have tried to settle. It has been suggested that we could do it by knitting in Transjordan, and it is argued that we carried out partition when we created Transjordan. That may be, but, if we try now, with Palestine as we know it to-day, to make it into two viable States, I say that we cannot do it. If we try to take away the taxable capacity of the best areas of Palestine for productive purposes, and that taxation goes entirely to the Jewish portion, you cannot expect the others to accept it. You cannot expect to make the one State dependent upon somebody else. The best partition scheme, and the most favourable one that I have seen up to now, has the effect that it would leave, at the present moment, 450,000 Jews and 360,000 Arabs in that Jewish State. I put that to the Arabs quite frankly, and what was their answer? The Arabs say: "If it is wrong for the Jews to be in a minority of 33½ or 40 per cent. in the whole country, what justification is there for putting 360,000 Arabs under the Jews? What is your answer to that?" I have no answer to that.

You transfer one large issue in solving your problem by partition, and there are only two possible consequences. Either the Arabs in the partitioned State must always be an Arab minority, or else they must be driven out—the one thing or the other—and, on that basis, I am afraid that I should be led, and the Government would be led, to a worse position. I have been asked: "Why go to the United Nations?" Any remedy that has been



put up to the Government in the form of creating a Jewish State, will lead to one result—the Arab States will take you to the United Nations. Supposing we partitioned the country now, and the question then went to the United Nations. Syria, or some other country, would take us to the United Nations, where we should have our conduct discussed on the basis of our legal action in carving up a State that was not ours, and I venture to suggest, after my experiences in New York last year, that Britain would be placed in a very funny position. It is indefensible. We can discuss all these things, I know quite easily, but really, we cannot do that.

Therefore, the Government tried to get the best they could within the Mandate, and, in the end, we came to the conclusion that this Mandate is really unworkable. I think we could establish a case that we have carried out what the Mandate originally intended, provided that the problem had not been accentuated by the Hitler régime. If we take the ratio of immigration and development unaccentuated by the Hitler régime, I think that the original basis of the Mandate, as visualised in 1922, has, in fact, been carried out. What we have not been able to do, is to meet with this Mandate the accentuated position created by the Hitler régime and the persecution in Germany. That is my view. I believe that throughout British Governments have done their best all the way through.

The Palestine Administration has had one of the most difficult tasks of any administration in the world. Sometimes, when reading the reports and documents, I wonder how they managed to carry through. They have had no support from the people, and they have been criticised by both sides. I believe that they have honestly tried to do their best, and that if there has been a failure in dealing with the problem of these displaced persons due to persecution of the Jews, it has not been the Palestine Mandate, as administered on the original basis, which has been the cause of failure; it has been the failure of the moral consciousness of international organisations to grapple with this problem as a whole which has left the problem as it is at the present time.

Take the position now. There are a million displaced persons on the Continent. I have said to Governments, week after week, what is a million people out of 4,000 million in the world? I have made the offer—and I make it from this Box to-day

—that, to get over this problem, we will take a proportion, together with all the other countries of the world, of that million, and add them to our population in order to get rid of this miserable state of affairs. The thing ought to be taken up and grappled with. I pleaded with the United States to take in thousands—I do not mean Jews; I do not single out Jews, and I do not think they ought to be singled out. But all States ought to do it. It is really absurd to think that, with all the organisation built up for this business, one million people could not be thus absorbed. That ought to be done, but, everywhere I go, and everywhere I turn, nobody wants them. It is a tragedy. They are doing something in South America, and in some other parts of the world, but it is relatively very little.

I will not mention the name of one great statesman in the British Commonwealth who came and gave me a half hour's lecture on the Zionist problem. When he had finished, I said to him, "How many will you take? I will get a ship and send them to you tomorrow." Not one. That is really sympathy without relief. We really ought to get rid of this problem, and if I could get back to the contribution on purely humanitarian grounds of 100,000—that is, 60,000 more than we are now taking in over two years—into Palestine, and if this political fight for a Jewish State could be put on one side, and we could develop self-government by the people resident in Palestine, without any other political issue, I would be willing to try again. I honestly believe that it could be accomplished. But, if the attack is made that this is merely the advance proportion coming out of Europe, in order that more millions can be poured in, so as to get a complete Jewish State, which we have never undertaken to create, I am afraid—and I say this with great sincerity—that that will provoke a conflict in the Middle East which I do not desire to see. There is enough conflict in the world already. I am convinced that if, as I have said to-day, we can bring the matter back to this contribution to the relief of European suffering, which was where His Majesty's Government originally started to deal with it, then there is a chance of solution.

Finally, there is the question of time. I have been asked whether we can do something before September. It is very difficult, and I cannot give an answer. I am studying the matter to see whether

there is any process by which we can get it considered earlier, under the Charter. But I must ask for more time on that. I am in consultation with Sir Alexander Cadogan, who knows the Charter inside out, to see whether anything can be done. Even now, rather than that it should go to the United Nations, I would prefer that Great Britain, with all her traditions, should be allowed to deal with the problem on a humanitarian basis. Let us remove the political conflict and get back to

relieving Europe of these 100,000 people as we are asked to do, and let us be allowed to deal with any further immigrants on the basis I have suggested. If there is a dispute, let there be arbitration, and, in the quickest possible time we can create an independent State in Palestine where Jew and Arab, who have such traditions and have contributed so much to the religious and cultural thought of the world, can work together and end these century-old conflicts.

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No. 6

### ARAB LEAGUE MEETING

*Sir R. Campbell to Mr. Bevin. (Received 25th March)*

(Extract)  
(No. 773) *Cairo,*  
(Telegraphic) *25th March, 1947.*  
My telegram No. 761.

Following is text of communiqué issued by Arab League Council, 24th March:—

"Council of League of Arab States held its 46th meeting, 24th March, under presidency of Youssef Yassin. Council examined Palestinian question from every point of view and unanimously took following decisions:—

"1. Since negotiations which have recently taken place with Great Britain at Palestine Conference in London have not resulted in an equitable solution and since British Government have subsequently announced that they would submit question to United Nations, the Council decides that Arab States should defend that cause by all means in their power before international organisation on basis of independence of Palestine.

"2. Council decide to establish committee to take all necessary measures in the course of defence of Palestinian cause by Arab States.

"3. Council recommends to Governments of Arab States that they should provide Higher Arab Committee with necessary funds to intensify propaganda for Palestinian cause before world public opinion and to provide it also with necessary funds to send Palestinian scholastic missions to specialise in science and arts with view to creation of University of Science and Arts in Palestine.

"4. Council expresses its lively opposition to continuation of Zionist immigration whether authorised by Great Britain or illegal, and demand that it should be immediately and totally stopped. It expresses its protest against weakness of measures taken by Great Britain to combat that immigration.



# NEW YORK CONSULATE-GENERAL SCENE OF JEWISH EXTREMISTS' DEMONSTRATION

Consul-General Evans to Mr. Bevin. (Received 2nd May)

(No. 33)

New York 4,

Sir, 23rd April, 1947

I have the honour to report that at about 11.5 a.m. on Friday, 18th April, an organised band of some 45 to 50 extremist Jews, chiefly of student type and including a number of girls, assembled *en masse* in the waiting-room which is part of the general office of this consulate-general. It was afterwards discovered that they had avoided prior discovery by infiltrating from various floors of this large office building; and one of the band's leaders was recognised as having visited the consulate-general earlier in the morning on what must have been a reconnoitring mission.

2. A member of the general office staff immediately reported the invasion to his supervising consular officer, who thereupon went to the general office and briefly interviewed one of the band. The latter stated that he wished to see "the consul" about the execution of Dov Gruner, and was told that he was speaking to a consul. At that stage, however, the rest of the band moved to the other side of the waiting-room partition, into that section of the general office where the office staff receives members of the public individually at their desks. There, at a word of command, they ranged themselves in two lines and burst into a series of Hebrew songs in tones that would have done credit to the Don Cossack choir. (It was later noted with some amusement that their harmonies failed them when it came to singing the American national anthem.)

3. As the intruders had now flagrantly invaded a private part of the consulate-general and as they were clearly taking things into their own hands, one member of my staff was instructed to telephone to the local police station, and another was sent down to the street to call the nearest policeman. Although the police station has frequently assisted us in dealing with previous Jewish demonstrations, and although it had somewhat prematurely deployed twenty officers outside our premises in expectation of trouble the night before, it took at least twelve minutes before a single policeman could be located on populous Lower Broadway and brought

to the scene of the invasion. Altogether some eighteen minutes elapsed before the main body of constabulary arrived.

4. During all this time my staff behaved with the utmost composure, and, indeed, continued dealing with those members of the public waiting in the general office, until all had been attended to, by which time the singing had reached a crescendo and the press of people in the outer corridors had prevented the entry of any further callers.

5. At about the time the police arrived, the invaders, obeying a military shout of command, sat down on the nearest desks and chairs and, for the most part, on the floor. Then, to the accompaniment of frequent shouts and applause, a number of speakers (including two obvious ring-leaders) harangued the mob. The orations, not always comprehensible but invariably demagogic and rabble-rousing, included the usual vicious abuse of yourself and such ancient history as a garbled version of the *Struma* affair (an unhappy choice of topic, as one member of my staff knew all too well that this early illegal immigrant ship was not scuttled in a magnificent gesture of defiance, but foundered with heavy loss of life as a result of the usual unseaworthiness and overloading). The speeches reached the depths of scurrility with the statement that "the only gangsters in Tel Aviv are the British troops and the only prostitutes their wives." Fortunately this was too much even for the Fascist-minded rabble on the floor, and at a later stage a spokesman (significantly enough one of the ring-leaders) withdrew the allegation.

6. It was, indeed, significant that the leaders obviously intended to avoid outright violence. Their policy was put to its greatest test in the course of a battle between a valiant lady member of my staff who, armed with the long pole used for opening and closing windows, sought to repel a photographer from the newspaper *P.M.* (now virtually a Zionist house-organ) who had pushed open a transom window and was busy snapping the scene. A surging attack on the lady was happily

prevented by the leaders of the demonstration; and, need it be added, our Mrs. Fountain not only ejected the photographer, but slammed the window in his face.

7. By this time it had become clear that a major breach of the peace was being committed, and it seemed probable that the demonstrators intended, in any case, to cause their own arrest. I therefore indicated to the senior police officer, a deputy inspector, that, although I was still in favour of securing an evacuation of the premises by peaceful means, I was prepared, if necessary, to make charges. On the strength of my assurance, the deputy inspector made a feeble effort to persuade the demonstrators to leave. The demonstration, however, became increasingly uproarious; and as it was evident that the Jews would not leave voluntarily, and that the police would neither clear the premises nor arrest the demonstrators, I personally called the office of the New York Police Commissioner.

8. In due course a full inspector of police arrived and, if anything, proved that the higher the level the closer to politics. It is true that Inspector Johnson called up his police vans and made all preparations to arrest the intruders as they left the building; but he showed no disposition to put his plans into operation, and, indeed, every disposition to procrastinate until 12.30 p.m., the hour which the ring-leaders had by now fixed for an end of the demonstration. I told the inspector that I could tolerate neither the invasion of our premises nor the arbitrary announcement that they would be occupied until a stated hour. Nevertheless 12.30 came; the demonstrators were still shouting and the inspector still talking. Finally, he asked my permission to make a last appeal to the Jews and I agreed, adding only a request that he take official note (for use in court should his appeal fail) of the fact that, in addition to one which I made in person to the demonstrators, I had authorised three separate appeals by the police for a peaceful departure over the space of an hour and a quarter.

9. Inspector Johnson then entered the general office, cleared it of all spectators, mounted a chair and addressed the demonstrators. He had previously attempted to dissuade a member of my staff from entering with him; but staff members did, in fact, follow him to listen with difficulty to a sycophantic appeal, delivered in an

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undertone with the speaker's back deliberately turned on the officials present, whom he apostrophised patronisingly to the intruders as "these people." The "appeal" provoked cheers and applause and finally secured a voluntary evacuation of the premises.

10. The inspector, I imagine, was not over-proud of his performance; and having first attempted an implied apology to a member of my staff, he fell over backwards to convince me of his willingness to provide police protection for the future. His demonstration to a not more than ordinarily stupid police officer on how to defend us to the death was reminiscent of the antics of Mack Sennett's "Keystone Cops" of a distant era of the cinema. It even evoked a derisive aside from one of his senior subordinates.

11. One of the more significant aspects of the whole business is, I submit, that combination of youthfulness and disciplined rabble-rousing tactics on the part of the demonstrators which put the *Hitlerjugend* to shame. In this connexion it is, perhaps, worth noting that according to *P.M.*, whose reporter had evidently been notified in advance, the demonstration had been planned in detail by the militant Jewish youth organisation Betar, which claimed to have been training some of these same demonstrators to go to Palestine as volunteers.

12. At the time that this invasion of the consulate-general was proceeding, the Acting Mayor of New York, Mr. Vincent Impellitteri, was receiving with ceremony at the City Hall members of the crew of the ship *Ben Hecht*, which was recently seized while conveying illegal immigrants to Palestine. I cannot but regard it as a significant, if not a sinister, coincidence that, at the moment when this official encouragement was being given to a group of conspirators against British authority, the New York police were showing such notable reluctance to take drastic action against another similar group of conspirators against the representative local office of the British Government. I am left with the suspicion that the police were well aware that the Jewish demonstration at the consulate-general had been planned. This is strengthened first by the absence, marked by comparison with their diligence on other occasions, of the police from the neighbourhood of the consulate-general at the time of the irruption; second, by their reluctance to take prompt and effective



action when summoned, and third, by the evident determination of the demonstrators to avoid any technical breach of the peace which would have precipitated direct police action against them. I cannot reject the possibility that the police, under political pressure, agreed to give the demonstrators full rein provided they gave no grounds for police action on the initiative of the latter. The repeated assertion of the police that they could eject the demonstrators only if I assumed the responsibility of charging them is evidence of their disinclination to act at all. I sincerely hope that the Special Assembly of the United Nations, which is to meet later this month in New York to consider the Palestine problem, will be better favoured by the local authorities.

13. During the war, the police had maintained an officer on duty at this consulate-general twenty-four hours a day. After the close of hostilities the withdrawal of this officer was agreed upon in deference to the difficulties from which the police force was suffering as a result of non-recruitment during the war. The question was raised again a few weeks ago when bombing threats became frequent and insistent, but again the police pleaded that lack of men would make such an arrangement extremely inconvenient if not impossible. The outrage of 18th April, however, has shown the utter necessity of constant police attendance, and the authorities have agreed to the resumption of the previous practice of having a policeman on duty throughout the day and night, with instructions to permit callers to enter the consulate only after scrutiny by my own doorkeeper.

14. Notwithstanding the unpleasant aspects of this incident, I consider that the

final outcome of the incident was not wholly unsatisfactory. The demonstrators will not be "martyred in court." We have shown considerable tolerance of a particularly objectionable and (alas, only somewhat) "unAmerican" demonstration. We are on record as having made three separate appeals for an orderly dispersal, and as having, in fact, stretched patience to its limits. We have also, I believe, left the police authorities with a slight feeling of shame.

15. The incident was factually recorded in the more sober New York newspapers, in a form which, on the whole, did not paint an attractive picture of the demonstrators; and the aftermath of the Texas City disaster as well as the occurrence of a particularly salacious sex-murder in Havana left the less reputable journals (including *P.M.*) with little or no space for the demonstration. Though I have received many oral and a few written expressions of sympathy and indignation, the average New Yorker of one's acquaintance was content to comment that we had many sympathisers here and that, with the occurrence of such incidents as this, the number was growing; he is beginning to wonder whether Judaism is, as now, to be regarded as a militant would-be national movement founded on race or as an inoffensive and respectable religion divorced from any nationality issue, as hitherto it has contented itself to be in the United States.

16. I have sent copies of this despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador in Washington, to Sir Alexander Cadogan, to the British Information Services and the British Passport Control Office in New York.

I have, &c.

F. E. EVANS.

E 4805/32/31

No. 8

# CONVERSATION WITH UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR

*Mr. Bevin to Lord Inverchapel (Washington)*

(No. 1121)  
My Lord,

*Foreign Office,  
4th June, 1947*

## Palestine

When the American Ambassador came to see me this morning, he informed me that he was doing everything in his power to bring pressure to bear against the subversive activities of the Jews in the United States. I welcomed his assurances. I also

informed Mr. Douglas that I had recently seen a group of moderate Jews, who expressed to me their fear that the representatives of moderate Jewry would not be allowed to express their opinions before the United Nations Commission.

2. I am sending a copy of this despatch to Sir A. Cadogan.

I am, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

E 5047/46/31

No. 9

## PALESTINE

### Report on Special Session of United Nations Assembly

*Sir A. Cadogan to Mr. Bevin. (Received 13th June)*

(No. 160)  
Sir,

*New York,  
7th June, 1947*

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a report compiled by Mr. Beeley on the recent special session of the United Nations General Assembly dealing with Palestine.

2. This report seems to me an excellent summary, to which I have nothing to add.

I have, &c.

A. CADOGAN.

Enclosure in No. 9

## PALESTINE

### *Report on Special Session of United Nations Assembly, April-May 1947*

1. The first special session of the United Nations Assembly, convened at the request of His Majesty's Government for the purpose of constituting and instructing a special committee to prepare for the consideration of Palestine by the regular annual session of the Assembly, opened on 28th April and concluded its work on 15th May.

2. The policy of the United Kingdom delegation at the special session was laid down in paragraph 4 of their brief: "It will be the task of the United Kingdom delegation to ensure that the arrangements made at the special session, for preparatory work on Palestine, are such as to offer the best possible prospect that the Assembly will carry the matter to a vote in the course of the regular session beginning in September." To this end the delegation sought:—

- (i) To secure the formation of a committee which would be able to work quickly and impartially.
- (ii) To ensure that the committee's terms of reference were such as would not in any way prejudice its conclusions.
- (iii) To expedite the work of the special session by confining it to procedural matters and avoiding discussion of the substance of the Palestine problem.

3. With regard to the composition of the special committee, the delegation's instructions were based on the assumption that the choice would lie between a relatively small committee of "neutral" States, excluding both the Arab States and the "Big Five," and a larger committee composed of all the members of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council. In the event, the principal decision which the Assembly had to make was whether or not the Big Five (and with them an Arab representative) should be included in the membership of a small committee.

4. The United States Delegation committed themselves at an early stage to the exclusion of the permanent members of the Security Council. Shortly afterwards they began to canvass support for a list of seven States—Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Peru, Uruguay and Persia. The United Kingdom Delegation promised their support for a committee of this character, without, however, committing themselves to the list of States.

5. In favour of the inclusion of the five permanent members of the Security Council, it was argued that without their participation the committee's conclusions would not carry sufficient weight; and that, if such differences as might arise between them were not ironed out in the committee, they would lead to delays in the September session of the Assembly. On the other hand, attention was drawn to the anomalous position in which any United Kingdom representative would find himself; it was made clear that the United States Government would also be reluctant to serve on the committee; and many delegates felt that "Big Five" representation should not be pressed against the declared wish of two of them. Another argument which made an impression was used by Senator Austin, who reminded the delegates of the "strong adverse interests that we constantly run into when the permanent members participate in the decision and in the debate leading up to it."

6. The Slav group favoured the inclusion of the "Big Five" in the special



committee. There was a danger at one stage that this proposal would obtain considerable support among the Latin Americans. The delegate for Argentina, in fact, introduced a proposal for a committee comprising the five permanent members of the Security Council, together with six other States chosen by lot in accordance with a formula giving more or less proportionate representation to various geographical areas. Thanks to Mr. Hadow's initiative he was persuaded, before any harm had been done, to express his readiness to withdraw this proposal from discussion and thereafter there was little danger of "Big Five" representation on the committee. The United States delegation, however, made contact with the Russians in an attempt to secure their agreement to the alternative form of committee in return for modifications in its proposed composition. It appears that this contact played some part in the presentation by the Chilean delegation of a proposal that Yugoslavia and Guatemala should be added to the American list. The way was opened for acceptance of these additions by an Australian motion in favour of a committee of eleven members, excluding the "Big Five."

7. When the vote was taken on the Australian proposal, we stood by our agreement with the United States delegation and voted against it. Senator Austin, however, voted in favour, with the curious result that, since the Australian motion was carried by thirteen votes to eleven and would have been lost if the American vote had been cast the other way, he prevented the Assembly from considering his own proposal. The passage of the Australian resolution was immediately followed by the addition to the committee of the two States proposed by Chile and by the election of India and Australia to fill the two remaining vacancies. The three votes were taken in rapid sequence and in circumstances which deprived the United Kingdom delegation of all influence on the composition of the committee. Both the Americans and the Russians were reasonably satisfied with the outcome, and the Arab delegates took the view that the committee finally appointed was likely to be less unfavourable to their cause than the smaller body originally proposed by the United States. It was generally assumed that the Czech representative on the committee would be favourably disposed towards the Zionists, and that the Indian

representative would occupy a similar position on the Arab side. The press also anticipated that the Persian member would incline towards a pro-Arab point of view, with the representatives of Uruguay and possibly the Netherlands exerting some influence in the other direction. So far as the probable attitude of the committee to His Majesty's Government is concerned, the addition of Yugoslavia and Guatemala to its membership is greatly to be regretted.

8. In the discussion of the Special Committee's terms of reference, two controversies arose. The Russians, with Arab support, attempted to include a directive to the effect that the committee should submit among its recommendations a proposal for the immediate independence of Palestine. The United Kingdom delegation resisted this suggestion on the ground that the committee should be left entirely free to make up its own mind, and should not receive instructions guiding it towards any particular solution. In the sub-committee which prepared the working draft of the terms of reference, we also defeated a Polish proposal which would have directed the committee to visit the displaced persons' camps in Europe and the detention camps in Cyprus. We argued that it was a matter of controversy between the Arabs and the Jews whether the situation in these camps was or was not relevant to the enquiry into the problem of Palestine, and that instructions to the committee in the sense proposed would amount to deciding in advance a question which should be left to the committee's own judgment. When the terms of reference were debated in the First Committee, the Polish delegation returned to the attack with a more subtle proposal which we could not oppose, for adding "and wherever it may be useful" to the directive that "the Special Committee shall conduct investigations in Palestine."

9. The spokesmen of the Jewish Agency, when they appeared before the First Committee, had expressed uneasiness at the inclusion of the reference to "independence" and had urged that the committee should visit the displaced persons' camps. The Arabs have consequently attributed their defeat on the question of independence, and the acceptance of the Polish amendment making it possible for the committee to conduct investigations in places other than Palestine, to Zionist

influence which they believe has been exercised through United States pressure on other delegations. These suspicions led them to an attitude of extreme scepticism as to the impartiality of the Special Committee and the value of presenting the Arab case before it. All the Arab delegates made statements, in either the First Committee or the General Assembly, reserving the right of their Governments to adopt whatever attitude they considered appropriate towards the later stages of the proceedings of the United Nations in relation to Palestine.

10. The tactics of the Arab delegations during the special session were exceedingly inept. It was their insistence on entering into the substance of the problem, thus using the Assembly as a sounding-board for the Arab case, which made it impossible to resist the Jewish Agency's application for a formal hearing. The same privilege had then to be granted to the Arab Higher Committee, whose unwise use of it caused a further setback to the Arab cause. From the point of view of His Majesty's Government, however, the failure of our effort to restrict the discussion to purely procedural matters had compensating advantages, for it enabled both the United Nations and the American public to see for themselves that the central issue in Palestine was not a struggle between a dependent population and an imperial administration, nor a conflict between Zionism and British policy, but a bitter contest between Arabs and Jews for the control of Palestine, each contestant denouncing the Mandatory Administration for showing too much favour to the other.

11. During the discussion of the First Committee's Report by the General Assembly, M. Gromyko made a speech which was unexpectedly definite and which gave rise to a great deal of speculation. After various references to the bankruptcy of the mandatory system of government in Palestine, M. Gromyko said that the United Nations must take account of the complete agreement between Arabs and Jews in calling for its liquidation. He then observed that "the aspirations of an important part of the Jewish people are bound up with the question of Palestine, and with the future structure of that country." After speaking of the sufferings of the Jews in Europe, he declared that—

"The fact that not a single Western European State has been in a position to guarantee the defence of the elemen-

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tary rights of the Jewish people or compensate them for the violence they have suffered at the hands of the Fascist hangmen, explains the aspiration of the Jews for the creation of a State of their own. It would be unjust not to take this into account and to deny the right of the Jewish people to the realisation of such an aspiration.

"It is impossible to justify a denial of this right of the Jewish people, particularly if one takes into account the experiences of this people in the Second World War. Consequently, the study of this aspect of the question and the preparation of corresponding proposals should also be a part of the important task of the committee.

"I come now to the question which is fundamental in the consideration of the task and powers of the committee which we propose to create; I come, that is, to the question of the future of Palestine."

Both Arabs and Jews had historical roots in Palestine, and occupied an important economic and cultural position there. No solution which ignored the lawful rights of either people could be justified. "These considerations are the basis upon which the Soviet Union delegation concludes that the lawful interests both of the Jewish and of the Arab peoples of Palestine can be defended in a proper manner only by the creation of one dual, democratic Arab-Jewish State." Contemporary history offered examples of peaceful co-operation between different nationalities within the framework of a single State. It would be useful to take this experience into account in solving the problem of Palestine. But although a single bi-national State was "the solution most deserving attention," it might be found that this plan was unrealisable owing to the deterioration of relations between Arabs and Jews. It would then be necessary to consider partition.

12. The resolution appointing a Special Committee on Palestine (annex A) was finally adopted in the Assembly by 46 votes against 7, with 1 abstention. Those voting against the resolution were the five Arab States, Afghanistan and Turkey; Siam abstained.

13. The United Kingdom delegation had been instructed to secure the adoption by the Assembly of a resolution condemning terrorism in Palestine, and, if possible, of a resolution condemning illegal immigra-



tion, if this could be done without opening the door to a lengthy controversy about current policy in Palestine. An attempt was made to persuade the United States delegation to add to their resolution on the Special Committee's terms of reference a paragraph appealing to all Governments and peoples to refrain from violence pending action by the General Assembly on the committee's report. They, however, took fright at this suggestion and declined to sponsor the paragraph. It was eventually introduced by the Norwegian delegate, and was adopted, after slight amendment in the Assembly, by the concurring votes of all the delegates present except the Arabs, who abstained (text at annex B). The delegation decided not to raise the issue of current immigration policy at the Assembly, but instead to address a letter on the subject, in which the Norwegian resolution was recited, to the Secretary-General (text at annex C).

#### Annex A

Whereas the General Assembly of the United Nations has been called into special session for the purpose of constituting and instructing a Special Committee to prepare for the consideration at the next regular session of the Assembly a report on the question of Palestine;

The General Assembly resolves that—

1. A Special Committee be created for the above-mentioned purpose consisting of representatives of Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia;

2. The Special Committee shall have the widest powers to ascertain and record facts and to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine;

3. The Special Committee shall determine its own procedure;

4. The Special Committee shall conduct investigations in Palestine and where it may deem useful, receive and examine written or oral testimony, whichever it may consider appropriate in each case, from the mandatory Power, from representatives of the population of Palestine, from Governments and from such organisations and individuals as it may deem necessary;

5. The Special Committee shall give most careful consideration to the religious interests in Palestine of Islam, Judaism and Christianity;

6. The Special Committee shall prepare a report to the General Assembly and shall submit such proposals as it may consider appropriate for the solution of the problem of Palestine;

7. The Special Committee's report shall be communicated to the Secretary-General not later than 1st September, 1947, in order that it may be circulated to the members of the United Nations in time for consideration by the Second Regular Session of the General Assembly;

8. The General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to enter into suitable arrangements with the proper authorities of any State in whose territory the Special Committee may wish to sit or to travel, to provide necessary facilities and to assign appropriate staff to the Special Committee;

9. Authorises the Secretary-General to reimburse travel and subsistence expenses of a representative and an alternate representative from each Government represented on the Special Committee on such basis and in such form as he may determine most appropriate in the circumstances.

#### Annex B

The General Assembly calls upon all Governments and peoples, and particularly on the inhabitants of Palestine, to refrain, pending action by the General Assembly on the report of the Special Committee on Palestine, from the threat or use of force or any other action which might create an atmosphere prejudicial to an early settlement of the question of Palestine.

#### Annex C

Sir, 23rd May, 1947

I have the honour, under instructions from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to invite your attention to the resolution passed by the General Assembly on 15th May in the following terms:—

"The General Assembly calls upon all Governments and peoples, and particularly on the inhabitants of Palestine, to refrain, pending action by the General Assembly on the report of the Special Committee on Palestine, from the threat or use of force or any other action which might create an atmosphere prejudicial to an early settlement of the question of Palestine."

2. It appears to His Majesty's Government that one of the most important ways in which members of the United Nations can assist towards a peaceful solution of the Palestine problem is by doing all in their power to discourage illegal immigration while the question remains *sub judice*.

3. As an indication of the gravity of this question, His Majesty's Government would point out that during the six months from mid-October 1946 onwards approximately 15,000 Jewish illegal immigrants from various European ports were intercepted in Palestine waters and diverted to camps in Cyprus. This figure may be compared with the present legal immigration rate of 18,000 a year and the fact, mentioned by Mr. Bevin in his speech in the House of Commons on 25th February last, that 96,000 Jewish immigrants had then been admitted to Palestine since May 1939.

4. In the face of this situation His Majesty's Government recently made renewed representations to all the European Governments concerned to prevent the departure of illegal immigrant vessels. Now, however, that the General Assembly

is seized of the question of Palestine, and in view of the resolution quoted above, His Majesty's Government consider that it is especially incumbent on all members of the organisation to discourage, as far as lies in their power, any illegal activity which is likely to increase the difficulty of finding a solution of the Palestine problem.

5. I am therefore instructed to request you to appeal to all member States to take the strictest precautions, in so far as they are concerned, to prevent the transit through their territory and the departure from their ports of Jews attempting to enter Palestine illegally.

6. I shall be grateful if your Excellency will inform me of the steps which you are able to take to give effect to this request and of the replies which may be received from members of the United Nations.

I have, &c.

V. G. LAWFORD.

His Excellency

M. Trygve Lie,

Secretary-General

of the United Nations,

Lake Success.

E 5334/951/31

No. 10

#### LEBANESE POLICY TOWARDS PALESTINE

Mr. Houstoun-Boswall to Mr. Bevin. (Received 19th June)

(No. 455) Beirut,  
(Telegraphic) 18th June, 1947.  
Palestine.

Following is extract from statement of Government's policy read by Prime Minister to the Lebanese Chamber on 17th June:—

"Our Government will continue its efforts in support of Palestine for the preservation of its Arabism and the attainment of its right to sovereignty and independence. We, in spite of the well-known delicate circumstances which have of late surrounded the case of this

unhappy Arab country, remain convinced that right will ultimately prevail. Announced both at United Nations and in Cairo our attitude towards the International Committee of Enquiry which has been set up and hold in full agreement with our sister States that genuine effort, organised action and sincere collaboration are necessary for saving Palestine and will guarantee the repelling of aggression regardless of how great and varied are the methods and elements of such aggression."



E 5489/32/31

No. 11

**JEWISH AFFAIRS IN THE UNITED STATES***Lord Inverchapel to Mr. Bevin. (Received 25th June)*

(No. 1466)

Washington,

16th June, 1947

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No. 2775 of 22nd November, 1946, I have the honour to enclose a further memorandum on the state of Jewish affairs in the United States, compiled by Mr. Bromley.

I am sending a copy of this despatch and of the memorandum to the United Kingdom Delegation at New York, the High Commissioner, Jerusalem, the British Middle East Office, Cairo, and to His Majesty's representatives at Cairo, Jedda, Bagdad, Beirut, Damascus, Amman, Angora, Moscow, Warsaw, Bucharest and Rome.

I have, &amp;c.

INVERCHAPEL.

Enclosure in No. 11

*Jewish Affairs in the United States***Introduction**

Despite the emergence of the American Zionists at the Basle Congress as the largest Zionist group in the world, the pressure exerted by Zionists in the United States and the publicity given to Zionist polemics was, until the execution of certain terrorists and the summoning of the Special Assembly of the United Nations, much less than during the period covered by the last report. The reason for this was that, until the United Nations Assembly, the United States Government was not closely involved in any of the important events in the development of the Palestine question during these months. The Basle Congress was a purely Zionist affair; there were no American observers present at the London talks; and it was in Jerusalem that the Zionist leaders held their discussions about future policy after the decision of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to refer the question to the United Nations. Moreover, that decision, while not pleasing to the majority of Zionists, put the whole problem in a wider setting. For the Zionists, it is now no longer a question of urging the United States Government to force His Majesty's Government to adopt a solution favourable to Zionist aspirations, but rather of putting pressure upon all Governments in the

world, though the United States attitude naturally continues to be of primary importance. The feeling of desperation nevertheless remains. The displaced persons problem is no nearer solution and it has become clear that there is small chance of relaxing the United States immigration laws or even of filling existing quotas. In approving United States participation in the International Refugee Organisation, for example, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee accepted an amendment, designed to still the fears of Republican Senators, which would prevent the President or any other United States authority from modifying the United States immigration laws without congressional consent.

2. In most of Europe prospects for the peaceful resettlement of Jews are poor. Anti-Semitic outbreaks continue to occur in Poland, Hungary, Roumania and Czechoslovakia. Continual vigilance is necessary to check such incidents. This factor has maintained a feeling of frustration, which has been strengthened by the failure of the violent efforts of last year to impose a change of policy upon His Majesty's Government, either directly or through the offices of the United States Government. It is undoubtedly true that in making these efforts the Zionists overplayed their hand. An increasing number of people in the United States are tired of the stridency of Zionist propaganda. In many areas anti-Semitism is on the increase. These facts, together with the impossibility of maintaining the pace for more than a limited time and the shifting of the scene to the United Nations, have decreased to a small trickle the flow of hostile letters to this embassy and to British Consulates in the United States—usually a good barometer of pro-Zionist excitement. The trickle was only increased when the carrying out of death sentences on Jewish terrorists became probable and then actually took place.

3. The proceedings of the Bâle Congress received much publicity in American newspapers, for it was the first to be held after the terrible sufferings of the Jews during the war and its main topic of discussion was a subject which had been much in the news during the previous months. But the

accounts given strayed little beyond factual reporting and it was evident that the confusion of the debates was reflected in the minds of the reporters. An analysis of the divisions within the Congress does not come within the compass of this report, but the most important result from the American point of view was the rise of Rabbi Silver to a position of prime importance in world Zionism. He was the chairman of the largest delegation (the Zionist organisation of America) which, under the rules of the Congress, was, as such, allotted the most speaking time. Under the rules, too, Silver, as head of the largest delegation, obtained the all-important post of chairman of the Political Committee and was thus in a position to carry the day against official Zionist participation in the London talks. This he did somewhat unscrupulously by asserting that His Majesty's Government had already made up their minds about Palestine and that there was therefore no point in the Zionists going to London. In the event it is improbable that this decision made much difference to the outcome of the talks, since even an official Zionist delegation would hardly have receded from the demand for at least "a viable Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine," but the refusal did nothing to strengthen the Zionist position.

**The Jews in the United States**

4. The primacy of Rabbi Silver and of the Zionist Organisation of America, has made itself felt. Some of the more moderate Zionists, who wished to maintain the British connexion, hoped that Silver's new position would bring with it a greater sense of responsibility. It was even reported to us by a member of the Zionist Organisation of America that the real feeling behind the condemnation of Britain expressed at the special meeting of the American Zionist Emergency Council held in Washington on 17th February to consider the position resulting from the failure of the London talks and the decision to refer the question to the United Nations, was one of regret that the family quarrel was now to come to the courts and of anxiety lest a possible trusteeship should be awarded to a country other than Britain. Silver's subsequent pronouncements and those of other leading American Zionists have not borne out that hope. They continue to castigate Britain, to misrepresent all her actions and to denounce in unmeasured terms anyone who dares to ques-

tion full Zionist claims. Silver himself, who is undoubtedly ready to sacrifice truth, where necessary, to Zionist political aspirations (including his own), leads a campaign which represents the whole movement as being based on humanitarian considerations, tempered by appeals to history and on an interpretation of the Balfour Declaration which is at best dubious. Zionist propaganda speaks constantly of the British Government's record of broken promises. As often as not these are not specified. But when they are it is usually the 1939 White Paper that has pride of place, though the Anglo-American Convention of 1924 is often dragged in also. In spite of the correct interpretation given by the State Department to this convention, the Zionists assert it to have laid down that no change at all could be made in the mandate without the consent of the United States Government. One small and rather curious exception to the general trend is provided by the *Inter-Mountain Jewish News*. The Denver Consulate reports that whereas prior to the new year each edition of this weekly could be relied on for one savage editorial against Britain, it has since then turned its attention, both in sorrow and in anger, to the Jewish extremists.

5. Although Rabbi Wise has resigned all his posts in American Zionist bodies, the split over partition is now little in evidence. The failure of the London talks threw it into the background and the presence in the unofficial Zionist delegation of Silver's deputy, Dr. Emanuel Neumann (who is likely to be the next president of the Zionist Organisation of America), ensured that nothing was accepted which might have prejudiced the position adopted by Silver at Bâle. The division of views was still apparent during the discussions in Jerusalem prior to the opening of the Special Assembly, but although it was left open to the delegates to explore in New York any solution which would safeguard the rights of the Jewish people to free admission and large-scale settlement, and would ensure the establishment of a Jewish State, they were committed to the full political programme formulated at the Bâle Congress and their explorations were not to commit the Zionist movement in advance to the acceptance of any specific proposals.

6. Routine condemnations of terrorism occurred in speeches from time to time, but the flow of advertisements inserted in the



newspapers by extremist organisations continued unchecked. Of these organisations, the American League for a Free Palestine continues to be the most active. It still appeals for funds and still states that contributions will be tax exempt under a Treasury Department ruling. Much publicity was given by it to the voyage under its sponsorship and the subsequent capture of the illegal immigrant ship *Ben Hecht*, whose crew were feted on their return and were received by the Deputy Mayor of New York. This organisation has also held in New York for propaganda purposes joint meetings with anglophobe Irish societies, with a platform built upon 1776 and 1921 and the exploitation of coloured and dependent peoples. It is now concentrating more on the fitting out of ships in the United States for the transport of illegal immigrants to Palestine from Mediterranean ports, and four of these ships are known to have sailed fairly recently, while there are rumours that others may be in preparation. The crews are largely Jewish and are recruited even from Canada. The American League for a Free Palestine acts as the American front for Bergson's Hebrew Committee of National Liberation, but it has met with less success in its sponsorship of the short-lived Palestine Resistance Committee, the object of which was to unite the various extremist groups. The dissolution of that body owing to internal dissension has recently been announced. The funds collected were stated to have been negligible and it has been replaced by a Palestine Resistance Fund, which is run entirely by the American League for a Free Palestine. The League has launched an appeal for \$7½ million, 40 per cent. of which is to be used for illegal immigrant ships, 40 per cent. for relief and medical and legal aid for underground fighters, and 20 per cent. for the establishment of a Provisional Hebrew Government. A savage attack on the indifference of rich American Jews in an open letter to the terrorists, signed by the playwright Ben Hecht, suggests that money is not coming in as fast as was hoped. Ex-Senator Gillette, the president of the organisation, is said to receive a fee of \$20,000, with a very generous expense allowance above that. Even Zionists have expressed doubts whether the funds collected all go to promote the League's published aims. A member of the Arab office, who debated the Palestine

question with Gillette on the wireless recently, was told by him that he might shortly resign his position as it was too much for him. Gillette hinted that there were disagreements and that he was tired of it all. For its part, the Hebrew Committee of National Liberation applied separately for representation before the Special Assembly of the United Nations, as it opposes the Jewish Agency as being too moderate. This application was turned down. It has also sent a letter to President Truman asking that the United States occupational authorities in Germany and Austria help Hebrew officials to organise the mass repatriation of all Hebrews in their zones to Palestine, provide 500 trucks and 20 surplus ships for the purpose, and grant \$50 million to the committee for transportation and resettlement. It has also asked that a United States administrator be appointed to supervise the proper application of American aid for the repatriation programme. Anatole Visson, the diplomatic correspondent of *Time* magazine, tells a story that on meeting Bergson some time ago he told him that he admired him very much for one thing. Bergson rose at once and enquired with much interest what that was. "You are the one subject," Visson said, "on which the British and the Jews are in full agreement."

7. The Political Action Committee for Palestine, under the chairmanship of ex-Congressman Joseph Clark Baldwin, has made a new departure with an appeal for funds to provide D.C. 4 aircraft to land or drop illegal immigrants in Palestine. Baldwin himself told the embassy that this programme would not be realised as the organisation's funds totalled only \$43,000. He sought unconvincingly to argue that he had succeeded in preventing a much more damaging boycott of British goods. Threats of such a boycott are received in this embassy from time to time, but few actual examples come to our notice.

8. In the Hollywood area it is reported that a certain amount of Zionist blackmail is going on. The names of film producers and others in the film world appear in extremist advertisements and it is certain that many of them only allow this to happen because they have been told that it will be the worse for them if they refuse. This principle no doubt extends to others whose names or media of publicity may be

valuable, and similar reports have been received from New York.

9. The anti-Zionist Jews have not been very active. The American Council for Judaism protested against the right of the Jewish Agency to represent all Jewish opinion before the Special Assembly, but was violently attacked by the Zionists for its pains. One of its leading members, Elmer Berger, came to the embassy to enquire about the British attitude. He was evidently much concerned, as are many American Jews for various reasons, about the effect of Zionist activities upon United States sympathy towards the Jews, and he rather hoped that the United States delegation would put forward his organisation's views. The council is most anxious that the Jews in the United States should not be considered as a separate entity, but should be thought of as ordinary American citizens. He admitted that his organisation had let their views go by default on a number of occasions and evidently realised that, though eminently respectable, they could not, owing to their small numbers (they claim 14,000 members) make any headway against Zionist pressure on the Administration.

10. The United Jewish Appeal has announced a target of \$170 million for its work this year, of which \$65 million is to come from New York. The main newspapers carry frequent advertisements which do not touch on political questions and the appeal was launched with a message from General Eisenhower. Henry Morgenthau, Jun., has just announced the formation of a National Christian Committee to assist the appeal. This committee will include high Government officials, army and navy officers, college presidents, newspaper publishers and leading business and industrial executives. Among them are Mr. Winthrop Aldrich, Mr. Edward Stettinius, Jun., Mr. La Guardia, Mr. Nelson Rockefeller and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

#### Zionists and the Administration

11. For the reasons mentioned in the introduction and probably also due to the passing of the November elections, Zionist pressure on the Administration decreased until the Special Assembly approached. The first signs of its recurrence coincided with the congressional debates on the Bill to aid Greece and Turkey, when certain

pro-Zionist Senators demanded that the taking over of British commitments in those countries should be linked with the question of British policy in Palestine and asked why some of the 100,000 British troops in Palestine should not be transferred to Greece. This was no doubt the result of instructions sent to local Zionist Emergency Committees by the American Zionist Emergency Council on 13th March. These stated that the failure of the United States Government to make progress on the Palestine issue was largely due to their habit of treating it as an isolated problem, wholly separate from the rest of Anglo-American relations and from other Near Eastern questions. Realisation of this mistake explained British obstinacy. While United States aid to Greece and Turkey was intended to secure international stability, the problems of the Near East were interrelated and it was not reasonable, these instructions said, that the United States Government should be asked to take a hand in stabilising the situation in one part of the area while being compelled to tolerate a situation in another which it regarded as very unsatisfactory. In view of Britain's increasing dependence on United States financial aid, it was no exaggeration to say that America was helping to finance the vast military establishment in Palestine and the military repression of its population. If the United States Government were to link the two problems, the British might prove more amenable. The local emergency committees were therefore asked to press these views on members of Congress, local newspapers and columnists and wireless commentators.

12. With the summoning of the Special Assembly, Zionist pressure on the Administration increased greatly. The Zionist Organisation of America in its paper *The New Palestine* announced a concerted drive in the United States to bring American public opinion to bear on the United States Government in support of the Zionist cause. Their two desiderata were—

- (1) that the Jewish Agency should obtain representation without a vote in the Special Assembly to combat Arab statements; and
- (2) that the United States Government should declare its attitude forthwith.



The State Department shared the view of His Majesty's Government that the Assembly should limit itself to questions of procedure, but, as things developed, they took the attitude that the Zionists should be represented if the Arabs continued to speak on the substance of the question and if a number of other States were in favour of their being heard. The State Department, therefore fell in with the eventual compromise that the Jewish Agency should appear before the Political Committee of the Assembly. The State Department admitted that Zionist pressure for the second desideratum was very great and, while extremely unwilling to state their attitude to the problem before the proposed committee had made its report in September, they would go no further than to say that they hoped to be able to maintain this position. They were in fact fortunately able to do so, but they are still under heavy pressure.

13. Representations to the State Department by this embassy concerning all forms of American aid for illegal immigration and terrorism have continued and have been backed by oral representations at all levels. After eleven months no written reply had been received and all that could be extracted was an expression of regret that no legal means were open to the United States Government to prevent such activities. It has even been indicated that the withdrawal of tax exemption facilities would stir up more trouble than it would be worth. It was quite evident that the State Department did not dare to use their influence, even though the whole question was coming to the United Nations, and the excuse was sometimes made that His Majesty's Government would be unwise to jeopardise the more important moves which were being made to assist them in carrying their general economic and political burdens. In view of the state of American opinion as a whole on the Palestine question which is referred to below, it is difficult to believe that the results would be so disastrous, but, as at the time of the American loan to Britain, it is possible that in a close fight in Congress some damage might be done by Zionist supporters. The last incitement to violence in an open letter to the terrorists from Ben Hecht stirred even the State Department, and it may at last be productive of some public condemnation. An interim reply from them to a protest

from this embassy indicated that a decision would be taken shortly. The United States Government are not likely to meet strong opposition, if they wish to condemn incitement to violence, but an official condemnation of United States aid for illegal immigration will be very strongly opposed by United States Zionists.

#### The Zionists and Britain

14. Abuse of Britain continues. Although its volume has decreased during recent months, the execution of the terrorists brought it into full flow again. This produced a short-lived outburst among the extremists, in which the phrase "legal murder" was freely used, and provoked a number of threats of violence to consulates, as well as a demonstration by the extremist body "Brith Trumpeldor" in His Majesty's Consulate-General at New York. The volume of correspondence received was not, however, very great. The Gruner incident was, in fact, the only one which made much impact. Earlier letters appealed for the commutation of the sentences upon terrorists, and some publicity was given to the departure of Gruner's sister, who went to Palestine in an attempt to persuade him to appeal to the Privy Council. Memorial services for Gruner were held by the United Zionists-Revisionists on her return. Newspaper advertisements have already been referred to, as has the greater activity recently shown in the fitting-out of illegal immigrant ships. Considerable pains are taken to prevent the leakage of information about this and the shipping companies involved often deny any knowledge of these activities when questioned by newspaper reporters.

15. Any story detrimental to Britain is widely believed, and frequent doubts have been expressed in Zionist speeches and publications as to the sincerity of Britain's intentions in referring the Palestine problem to the United Nations. These doubts were strengthened by a *New York Times* report from London that Britain intended to cling to the mandate and to turn down any United Nations recommendations of which she disapproved. From the local point of view it has been unfortunate that little could be done to combat this misrepresentation of His Majesty's Government's position, but wider considerations dictated the decision to proceed cautiously at this stage. Another series of articles by I. F. Stone appeared in the newspaper *P.M.* dealing with his recent visit to

Palestine. There was much in them about the alleged ill-treatment of illegal immigrants and the achievements of the Jewish settlers, but they were gossipy and emotional. The success of his previous series of articles is said to have persuaded the editors to send him on his recent trip, but his readers would mostly be numbered among the already converted. In conversation he expressed admiration for the forbearance of British troops, a feeling which, in spite of his strong views about British policy, he insisted was genuine. It was suggested to him that he might have written a little more about that.

#### United States Opinion

16. To judge by the lack of comment on Zionist affairs, the United States public at large remains on the whole indifferent to the question of Palestine. It was excited for a few days about the Secretary of State's remarks concerning President Truman's support for the immigration of 100,000 Jews into Palestine, but even then many newspapers, upon reflection, concluded that the accusation had substance and that the United States was in no position to criticise while refusing to share the burden. Reports from consulates throughout the United States have indicated that anti-Semitism is on the increase. They also bear out the conclusion reached in the last report that the great mass of people is not interested in the Palestine problem. This indifference remains strongest in the great central section of the United States, but even on the west coast hostility to the Jews is increasing. There is considerable Jewish anti-Zionism (as usual among the wealthier Jews) and there is also increased understanding of the British position. These people are not vocal, partly because of the blackmail activities already referred to, partly because they do not wish to be put in the position of criticising their own Government, and partly because they feel, as well-established United States citizens, no call to intervene. In the Middle West there is some support by non-Jewish Americans for the Zionist cause because they do not want more Jews in the United States. In the south the interest is very small—there was, for example, no editorial on the subject in New Orleans newspapers over a period of eighteen months.

17. Support for the above views is afforded by an interesting series of polls carried out by the National Opinion

Research Council of Denver University and by the Gallup organisation. According to the former, in May 1946 45 per cent. of the people polled knew that Great Britain administered Palestine, as against 32 per cent. in December 1944. As many as 46 per cent. at the later date did not know who administered the country, or thought that Palestine was independent. Only 28 per cent. had heard of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry's report, and 12 per cent. only approved of it. Some 50 per cent., according to Gallup, had followed generally the discussion about letting Jews into Palestine, and the majority of these were in favour of it. 61 per cent. thought that the United States should help in arranging for the admittance of the 100,000 Jews, but the same percentage was opposed to United States intervention to maintain order. 72 per cent. thought that the United Nations should handle the problem. On the wider question of whether the United States should admit some displaced persons, only 23 per cent. were in favour, but 50 per cent. were ready to do so if other countries agreed to do the same. When assessing the strength of anti-Semitism it is interesting to recall that in a poll conducted in September 1944 to determine how many Americans were in favour of admitting to the United States a limited number of foreigners of certain nationalities, the English led with 68 per cent. and were followed by Swedes, Russians, Chinese, Mexicans and Jews in that order. 46 per cent. were in favour of letting some Jews in, and 46 per cent. wished to stop them altogether. Only the Germans and the Japanese won less support.

18. On the question of anti-Semitism too it may be interesting to note the results of a survey just published by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith covering the year 1946. The conclusion reached was that, although there was some evidence of systematic co-operation among a number of ultra-Nationalist bodies, organised anti-Semitism had generally declined throughout the United States. At the same time there was an increase in discrimination against Jews in employment and housing in the Middle West, and anti-Semitism continued to be prevalent in the south. The impression given was that more subtle forms of anti-Semitism had grown, by which is meant the increase of anti-Semitic feeling generally, much as has been recorded by many of the British Con-



ulates in the country. In the absence of organised groups to which attention could be drawn, it is not possible to pin this down by any more concrete phrase than the "more subtle forms" to which the B'nai B'rith report refers.

19. The press is inevitably more aware of the Palestine problem than the man in the street. But even there the amount of space devoted to the problem was, until the Special Assembly, not large, and the volume of comment was smaller still. This in itself may be taken as some indication of the state of United States opinion. The Left-wing press and despatches from United States correspondents in Palestine have been almost invariably hostile to Britain. This section of opinion has made use of material contained in Koestler's "Thieves in the Night" and has more recently eagerly quoted "Behind the Silken Curtain in Palestine" by Bartley Crum, an American member of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry. This book makes great play with British Imperialist motives and the alleged double dealing of some State Department officials. It is having a fairly good sale. In the weekly list of the sixteen most popular general books which appears in the *New York Times Book Review*, it ranked fourteenth in its first appearance. It then rose to eighth place, disappeared altogether the following week, and re-appeared once more in the eighth place. Its relative popularity is no doubt partly due to the "revelations" which it makes and partly due to its appearance on the eve of the Special Assembly.

20. The United Nations session was very fully reported, though without much comment. There was considerable sympathy in the press with Jewish claims for a hearing, especially after somewhat intemperate early speeches by the Arab delegates. The outcome of the session was received with reasonable satisfaction, except on the Left, where the usual charges were made of British delays and evasions. The hope was generally expressed that Great Power politics would not play too large a part in the Special Committee's work, but a number of the more serious and conservative commentators and writers stressed the wider aspects of the problem and the probability that these must affect the attitude of many Powers.

### The Arab Office

21. There are few signs that the Arab Office is making much progress. It occasionally provides speakers for forums and it has a considerable amount of correspondence with individuals, but it fails altogether to reach a wider audience, whose knowledge of the Arab case can only be drawn from the fairly full accounts of Arab speeches in the United Nations Assembly. It is doubtful whether many will have taken the trouble to read even these. Musa Alami, the Director-General of the Arab Offices, has been spending some time in the United States and there is talk of setting up branches in Chicago and San Francisco, but the disagreement between him and the Mufti's group obviously breeds uncertainty as to the future of the Arab Offices which hampers their work and does not encourage their staff. The only incident of note was a search of the Washington Arab Office by the F.B.I. Responsibility for this was claimed by Representative Sabath (D., Chicago), an old enemy of theirs who last year accused them of being financed by the British Embassy. Members of the Arab Office firmly believed that it was a put-up job. The State Department, however, insisted that it was merely a routine investigation of a foreign agency. Protests were made by Arab representatives in Washington, but nothing appears to have come of them.

### Conclusion

22. The atmosphere during the last six months has been quieter than that of the previous year because, as suggested in the Introduction, the main events happened elsewhere and the United Nations discussions put the whole matter in a wider setting. United States Zionists were extremely apprehensive about the United Nations because they feared that many States would court the Soviet Union, which was thought to favour the Arab cause. They were correspondingly heartened by M. Gromyko's statement that partition might be a possible solution—though in fact all he did was to sit on the fence—and this offset their disappointment that in spite of very great pressure the United States Government has so far refused to define its attitude.

23. The United States Government, for obvious reasons, did not like the idea of the problem coming to the United Nations and

many Americans resented the fact that they were thereby being dragged into the dispute. But those who are friendly to Britain realise that an irritant in Anglo-American relations will be removed if the United Nations can produce, and secure acceptance for, sensible recommendations. Others hope that some contribution to the solution of the displaced persons problem will be made. Some of these last are genuinely concerned with the plight of the displaced persons, but many others hope that such a contribution may relieve the United States of the necessity of making her own.

24. It can be assumed with some certainty that the problem of the Soviet Union has played a large part in lessening American interest in the whole affair. The effect of this problem has been two-fold: first, it has in itself occupied a major part of American thinking on foreign affairs, and second, more and more people are coming to realise that it is important for the United States that Britain should continue to hold her position in the Middle East. This means that Britain's concern with the wider aspects of the Palestine question (strategy and oil) is beginning to be recognised as somewhat less discreditable than it had hitherto always been assumed to be. There is thus a direct relationship between United States opinion on the Soviet Union and United States opinion on British Middle Eastern policy. There was, as previously mentioned, surprisingly little reference to Palestine in the discussions on aid to

Greece and Turkey, despite a few attempts to link the two questions. Indeed, very little space in the Congressional Record has been taken up with Palestine over the whole period covered by this report. We are still told from time to time that British policy in Palestine constitutes a threat to Anglo-American relations, but this is even less true now than it was six months ago. It is an irritant but no more. Soviet policy and the work of the United Nations have between them introduced a new set of considerations. The first has brought a greater realisation of the importance to the United States of a strong Britain and a greater understanding of Britain's difficulties, while the second has lessened pro-Zionist pressure by diffusing it. The United States Government will obviously have a difficult task in balancing the Administration's desire to help the Jews against its increasing interest in peace and security in the Middle East. No one yet knows what their eventual policy will be and it is evident that it is causing them great concern. But let it be said again that the great majority of Americans are indifferent to the whole question. They would prefer not to have displaced Jews in the United States and they do not want to be involved in maintaining peace in Palestine. Their interest in the Middle East will depend upon the future policy of the Soviet Union in the area and there, whatever the temporary disagreements, British and American interests are in the long run the same.

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No. 12

### ARAB STATEMENT ON THE PALESTINE PROBLEM

Mr. Houstoun-Boswall to Mr. Bevin. (Received 23rd July)

(No. 550)  
(Telegraphic)

Beirut,  
22nd July, 1947.

Following is translation of statement by the Arabs to United Nations S.C.O.P. at public session at Beirut to-day:—

"The Arab Governments, convinced that the Palestine problem only allows for one solution, namely, the termination of the mandate and the independence of Palestine, and that any enquiry into a problem so clear has become superfluous, nevertheless decided to reply immediately to the invitation which was made to them by your

honourable commission, appointed by the highest international authority the world has ever known.

2. They are persuaded that, anxious as you are to assure the conditions necessary for international co-operation of all peoples, you will adopt, as a result of your enquiry, recommendations in conformity with the principles of free will and independence which have been consecrated in the Charter of the United Nations.

3. Similarly the Arab Governments do not intend in this memorandum to



enumerate all the reasons on which the Palestine cause is based, but will confine themselves to drawing the attention of the commission of enquiry to essential points: (a) the right of Palestine to self-determination; (b) the necessity for maintenance of peace in the Middle East.

(a) *The right of Palestine to self-determination*

4. When the Balfour Declaration was issued providing for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine and opening the way for Jewish immigration, the Arabs formed 93 per cent. of the total population. This declaration, which cannot legitimately be opposed to the Arab Palestine, ignored before and after its proclamation the right of Palestine to self-determination. Later an attempt was made to force the Arabs into silence or into resignation. But far from stamping out their demands, the restrictions which they have suffered have had the effect of reinforcing them in their desire for liberation and in their faith in the justice of their cause.

5. Their struggle for the independence of their country and the safeguarding of their rights goes back to the beginning of this century to the time of the national awakening of the Arab peoples subjected to Ottoman domination. They took part in the movement of liberation of these peoples, sparing neither effort nor sacrifices. They revolted with the other Arabs against the Turks and struggled by the side of the Allies on all the battlefields of the Middle East, in the Hedjaz, in Palestine, in Syria, in Lebanon, in Iraq.

6. Associated with the victory of the Allies in 1918, they had the right to enjoy that liberty for which those same Allies had fought, but the liberty to which they aspired and for which they had fought was denied them for considerations which were strange to them. Finding themselves suddenly faced with the ambitions of Zionism and the undertakings of the Powers in this respect, the Palestine Arabs were forced to take up against their own allies the struggle which they had undertaken against the Ottoman Empire.

7. The Allied Powers had made short and cynical shift of the promises made to the Arabs before their revolt. A mandate, on imperialist lines, was imposed upon them. The most onerous of these mandates fell upon Palestine. The difference lay in the fact that whereas the mandate over

Lebanon, Syria and Iraq stipulated that it was the duty of the mandatory to assist the country of its trust, and to lead it towards independence as envisaged by article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, in regard to Palestine, however, the mandate embodied the provisions of the Balfour Declaration providing for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine, for the promotion of Jewish immigration and the establishment of the Jews in a country which is not their own.

8. This process had disrupted the course of the historical and creative development of the Palestine Arabs. They found themselves having to struggle not only for their independence and liberation from foreign influences and pressure, but also against an onslaught of an alien people claiming a superior right to the country and relegating the right of the indigenous inhabitants to barely more than sufferance.

9. The continued struggle of the other Arab countries for independence and national sovereignty resulted in the termination of the mandate over Iraq, and finally in the complete and unconditional liberation of Lebanon and Syria from foreign occupation. The situation in Palestine, however, has been deteriorating and steadily getting from bad to worse. It has been deluged with Zionist immigration, thereby frustrating Arab national development and liberation.

10. These national calamities which Palestine has suffered and the injustices which they have entailed for the indigenous population derive internationally from two legally questionable documents, namely, the Balfour Declaration and the mandate. These have formed the basis of Jewish demands.

11. In the Balfour Declaration the British Government undertook to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish national home, thereby violating the principles of liberty, self-determination and international law. When the Balfour Declaration was issued, Britain as yet had no legal connexion with Palestine, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the Balfour Declaration violates the commitments and undertakings previously made by Britain to the Arabs in the King Hussein-McMahon correspondence, which recognise Arab independence within boundaries comprehending Palestine. Finally, the Balfour Declaration contravened the declaration of 8th November, 1918, which proclaimed that Britain was entering the

country as an Allied liberator, and not as a conquering nation.

12. As for the mandate, it has the same prohibitory vices as the Balfour Declaration. It contravenes also the terms and spirit of article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. In brief, whereas the Covenant of the League envisages a mandate designed to serve exclusively the interests of the mandated territories and to assist such territories in attaining full and mature independence, the Palestine mandate was designed principally to place the country in such political, administrative and economic condition to ensure the development and establishment of a Jewish national home.

13. In addition, article 23 of the Charter of the United Nations lays down that the populations of countries under mandate should be consulted. This was not done in the case of Palestine. Nevertheless, the American Commission called the King-Crane Commission, which was sent to Palestine in 1919, defined its point of view in respect of the Balfour Declaration in the following terms:—

14. [Groups undecypherable] impossible to establish a Jewish Government without depriving the non-Jewish population of Palestine of their religious and civic rights. The truth which the commission was able to ascertain as a result of its conversations with the Jewish representatives is that the Jews foresee the departure of the non-Jewish inhabitants after the purchase of their land. To expose a people whose state of mind is such to an unlimited Jewish immigration is to deny those rights and to oppose those principles for which the Allies went to war.

The Peace Conference should not lose sight of the fact that the feeling of aversion in Palestine and Syria towards Zionism has reached its zenith and could not easily be any greater. All the English officials with whom the commission spoke considered that the Zionist programme cannot be applied unless recourse is made to an armed force of at least 50,000 soldiers.

15. These conversations proved to what point the Zionist programme is prejudicial to the non-Jewish inhabitants. It is true that it is sometimes inevitable to have recourse to armed forces in order to carry out certain decisions, but it is unreasonable to use these troops for the execution of unjust decisions. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the essential arguments of the Zionists concerning their rights in

Palestine are founded on the fact that they occupied the country 2,000 years ago. This is an argument which is not worth consideration.

16. It is to be remembered that non-Jewish population of Palestine, nearly nine-tenths of the whole, are emphatically against the entire Zionist programme. The tables show that there was no one thing upon which the population of Palestine were more agreed than upon this. It must be believed that the precise meaning in this respect of the complete Jewish occupation of Palestine has not been fully sensed by those who urge the extreme Zionist programme. It would intensify, with a certainty-like fate, the anti-Jewish feeling both in Palestine and in all other portions of the world which look to Palestine as the Holy Land" [*sic*].

17. Zionists, however, have not been satisfied with the provisions of the Balfour Declaration and the mandate, despite their violation of the inalienable rights of the Arabs, but have attempted to interpret whatever ambiguity exists in these provisions to press their extreme demands and destroy effectively Arab structure and national existence in Palestine.

18. Almost at the eleventh hour Britain admitted the anomalous position created by the conflicting promises of the Allied Powers to the Arabs and Jews. She admitted that in carrying out her obligations as the mandatory Power she was coming into conflict with the rights of the Arabs in their country on the one hand and with the promises to the Jewish people contained in the Balfour Declaration on the other hand, thereby rendering the practical implementation of the mandate impossible of realisation. On that basis, therefore, Britain has referred the Palestine question to the United Nations.

19. Following the failure of the last London conference with the following declaration he said: 'We shall explain to the United Nations our conviction that the mandate was impossible of implementation and that it is impossible to reconcile the commitments made to the two parties.'

20. This is proof that both the Balfour Declaration and the mandate were unnatural and could not provide the basis of an acceptable legal and legitimate position. This also serves to support the Arabs in their right not to recognise the provisions of these two documents which on any interpretation or analysis are found to be in violation of the most elementary rights of



justice. They constitute a threat to the most treasured of Arab rights, namely, the right to live.

21. To recapitulate in brief, the right of self-determination which should have been enjoyed from the start by the Palestine Arabs' peoples has been continuously violated and is being violated to-day. This right is natural, conditional and inalienable, and remains in perpetuity. It cannot be denied either by resort to force or on the basis of a policy of *fait accompli*. It is in fact the burning issue of the Palestine question in itself alone a complete answer to Zionist allegations. The Arab Governments demand its implementation in full and see in the democratic principles which inspire the United Nations tacit recognition of it and the strongest guarantee for its implementation. The Arab State do not doubt that the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine will not advance a settlement in violation of this indisputable human right or of the principles inspiring the international forum you are here to represent.

(b) *Threats to peace in the Middle East*

22. The attitude of the Arab Governments and peoples with regard to Zionism is founded in the second place on their desire to preserve peace in the Middle East. This peace is menaced by expansionist ambitions and terrorist methods of Zionism. At the outset the Zionist movement was content with a refuge in Palestine. Later it demanded a national home. When it had obtained the national home it tried to extend it to make of it a sort of State in the heart of Palestine endowed with its own institutions, its own finance, its own economy and its own army. To-day the Zionist wants the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine which will later engulf the whole of Palestine, and before these projects even realise the Zionists' hope to extend it at the expense of its Arab neighbours.

23. At the peace conference in 1918, the Zionist Organisation had in effect, in a memorandum dated 3rd February, 1919, officially claimed the whole of Transjordan and a part of Syria and the Lebanon as far north as Saïda, Jisr El Karaon, Wadi-el-Teim and the Harmoun. And, in the course of the negotiations which took place in the same year between France and Great Britain in their capacity as the mandatory Powers over these countries which had been detached from the Ottoman Empire, this same organisation demanded the extension

of the northern frontiers of Palestine to the Litani River and to plains of Hauran and Joulund in Syria.

24. These territorial ambitions have been publicly supported since that time. All the responsible Zionist leaders have continued to declare their dissatisfaction with these boundaries and to describe them as 'the limitations of the mandate' which Zionism refuses to recognise. They have further stated that it is their intention to enlarge them considerably in the future. Quite recently again Mr. Ben Gurion, on the occasion of the elections of the Histadruth at Haifa in 1944, declared publicly that the Jews, who were coming to Palestine by force if necessary, would not hesitate to extend the boundaries of Palestine, and that the Jewish State proclaimed by Zionism was not the final objective of this movement but a stage leading to it.

25. And when at the beginning of 1946 the British Government made it known that it intended to recognise the independence of Transjordan within its actual frontiers, Mr. Shertock declared to the press on 23rd January, 1946, that the Jewish Agency would oppose with all resources the realisation of this project and that the Zionists who had not previously objected to the mandate of Transjordan could not nevertheless admit the cession of Transjordan from Palestine.

26. This declaration by one of the chiefs of the Jewish Agency was reinforced by a note to the Secretary of State for the Colonies protesting against the proclamation of Transjordan independence and underlining that Transjordan, which constitutes one part of the territories submitted to British mandate, could only be considered as the eastern part of Palestine. The propagators of Zionism did not fail to lay before the commission the true intentions of that organisation with regard to the frontiers of Palestine. This fact emerges from the exposition of Mr. Shertock as well as from that of Rabbi Fishman who recalled that God had promised to the Jews a territory extending from the Sinai Peninsula to the Euphrates.

27. But Zionism does not confine itself to simple means of propaganda for the execution of its expansionist projects at the expense of the Arab countries. Its plan includes recourse to terrorism both in Palestine and in other countries. It is known that a secret army has been formed with the object of creating a state of tension and trouble by attempts against the life of the representatives of authority and

by the destruction of public buildings. The assassination of Lord Moyne in Egypt, the blowing up of the British Embassy in Rome, the King David Hotel and the officers' club in Jerusalem, the Acre Prison, roads and railways as well as the kidnapping and flogging of British officers are enough examples of the terrorists methods instituted by the Zionist Organisations with a view to seizing power by violence in a country which is not their own.

28. This aggressive attitude born of the weakness shown by the mandatory Powers towards Jews will not fail to provoke in its turn the creation of similar Arab Organisations. The responsibility for the troubles which may result from this throughout the Middle East will belong to the Zionist Organisations alone which will have been the first to use these methods of violence. The Arab Governments hope, nevertheless, that the situation of the Jewish communities in their countries will not be affected.

29. No State could in effect accept an immigration as massive as that to which Palestine is a victim. Restrictions on immigration have been established everywhere, based on the superior interests of the country and of the rights of its inhabitants. It is thus that the Canadian Government has just declared that it will only admit into its vast territories 5,000 foreign refugees. The Australian Government has similarly announced that it will not tolerate the formation of colonies by refugees admitted into its territory, and that these refugees must be spread out throughout the country in order that they may be assimilated. Similar measures have been taken in Norway and in numerous other countries.

30. You will have seen that the situation in Palestine is not unstable and contains the germs of conflicts which may spread to the whole of the Middle East. The Arab Governments cannot remain indifferent. The security of their own countries is in question and gives them the right, or rather makes it a duty for them, to resist Zionism by all the means in their power. Moreover, the maintenance of the Arab character of Palestine which has been hers for centuries is a condition of the harmonious development of the peoples of the Middle East and of their collaboration in the work of peace and progress in the world. Palestine for ethical, cultural, political and economic reasons is in fact an integral part of this Arab world which has already organised itself into sovereign States linked together

by a political and economic pact, namely, the Cairo Pact of 22nd March, 1945. This organisation has been formed within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations and is in accordance with the spirit of that Charter, which encourages regional organisations and pacts. Every fissure in this whole, every difference between the States which form it, threatens to overthrow it and to plunge this particularly sensitive part of the world into trouble and disorder.

31. The Jewish State which the Zionists are determined to establish in Palestine is besides not a viable State either from the political or from the economic point of view. The Arab States could not in fact tolerate the creation of a State made up of foreign elements brought from all parts of the world with their different mentalities and their insatiable covetousness for which allusion has already been made.

32. To a State established by violence the Arab Governments will be obliged to oppose violence. That is the legitimate right of every creature in self-defence. On the other hand the foreign State projected in Arab territory will not be able in any case to count on establishing economic relations with the Arab States surrounding it. A State created in these conditions could only be still-born.

*Conclusion*

33. The Arab Governments fervently hope that the commission will take into account the above-mentioned considerations and will be obliged to propose a solution capable of ending the present troubles, and of assuring the triumph of justice and the establishment of peace in the future. The Arab Governments are persuaded that to arrive at this goal solution can only be inspired by the democratic principles on which the organisation of the United Nations was founded.

34. The first of these principles demands that the independence of peoples and their right to dispose freely of their own future be respected. The Arab people of Palestine ask before all else that their right to liberty and to sovereign independence should be recognised. The Arab Governments are unanimous in according their support without reserve to the realisation of these claims. They have already presented precise propositions in this sense and they wish to-day to underline once more one of these propositions because they attach to it the greatest importance, and because this



proposition constitutes a fundamental condition about which there can be no compromise.

35. This proposition consists in the necessity to stop immediately all Jewish immigration into Palestine, to maintain the restrictions now in force concerning the transfer of land and the immediate formation of an independent Arab Government founded on democratic principles. The Arab Governments consider on the other hand that any project for partition, far from resolving the Palestine dispute, will only aggravate it. Any Jewish State created in Palestine would inevitably become a nest of intrigues and a centre for the rallying of all the Zionist forces destined to be launched against the Arab countries. The Arab Governments will in no case accept the implantation of Zionism in the form of an autonomous State and in an Arab country on which hundreds of thousands of foreign immigrants would converge.

36. The Arab Governments wish to proclaim their conviction that the partition of Palestine and the formation of a Jewish State would only result in the unleashing of bloodshed and trouble in the entire Middle East. The Royal Commission of enquiry had only to propose the partition of Palestine in 1937 to provoke a national revolution which lasted until the war. For the rest, given the geographical, economic and ethnographic conditions of the country, no plan for partition could be viable. This little country cannot be divided into two or three States opposed to each other and harbouring nothing but feelings of suspicion and hostility against each other.

37. The only solution which would be possible and which the [? Arab] Governments would consider capable of settling the dispute would be, as indicated in the project presented by the Arab delegates to the London Conference on Palestine in September 1946 to form a free government based on proportionate representation and to give to all Jews who have acquired Palestine nationality by legitimate means the same rights as those given to Arab citizens. The Arabs, who have always considered that the Jewish immigrants established in Palestine since the beginning of the mandate should not be considered as Palestinian citizens, wish to show by these propositions the conciliatory spirit which moves them in their ardent desire to smooth out the difficulties.

38. This proposition could not result, as certain Zionist leaders pretend, in the deprivation of the Jewish citizens of Palestine of their rights because they would remain a permanent minority. The Jewish minorities in the Arab States have never been ill-treated. On the contrary, they live in perfect accord with the majority and enjoy the same rights as the rest. Ever since the most distant periods of history the Arabs have never established discrimination between peoples to whatever race and to whatever religion they belonged. They have always accorded to the Jewish communities in particular equitable treatment based on the principles of justice and equality. Far from oppressing them, they offered refuge to those who were fleeing from the régime of liberty and equality which was given them, have risen to highest positions in the field of politics, administration, finance and science.

39. The Zionists, on the other hand, tried to justify their claims by declaring that they wish to protect their co-religionists from persecution to which they are actually subjected. Thanks, however, to the victory of the democracies there now exists no home of anti-Semitism in the whole world. The minorities have recovered all their rights and exercise them everywhere.

40. As for the problem of refugees and displaced persons, it should be compulsorily separated from the Palestine problem and resolved on a basis of co-operation and international solidarity. There can be no question of transferring these refugees *en masse* to Palestine. The alleviation of the sufferings of one people should not and cannot be achieved by the aggravation of the sufferings and the annihilation of another people.

41. The Arab Governments cannot close this exposition without expressing again the hope that your commission, taking into consideration the views which have been developed here, will adopt the only just solution to this problem, namely, the sovereign independence of Palestine and the immediate cessation of immigration which is in danger of changing it. For any solution which does not take into account the environment of Palestine, that is to say the attitude of Arab peoples and Government, would be doomed to certain failure. Moreover, such a solution would only aggravate the existing dangers and would be full of menace for the future."

E 9484/951/31

No. 13

## ARAB POLICY IN PALESTINE

Mr. Evans to Mr. Bevin.

(Received 10th October)

(No. 727)

Beirut,

(Telegraphic)

10th October, 1947.

Following communiqué was issued late on 9th October following meeting of the Arab League Council:—

"The Council of the Arab League held their third meeting at Aley on 9th October, 1947, at 1500 hours under the presidency of the Prime Minister Riad Solh. After the messages addressed to the General Secretariat had been read, the President of the Council read the summary of the decisions taken by the sub-committee composed of the heads of the delegations of the Arab States dealing with the precautions which should be taken for the defence of Palestine in the light of latest developments, the general situation, and the possible developments arising out of the decisions of the British Government as mandatory Power in respect of their policy towards Palestine. After discussing these decisions, the following resolutions were approved by the members of the Council of the League:—

1. The Council consider that the Bludan secret decisions, which were to be executed in the event of the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry being accepted and a plan devised for their execution, are still valid and should be executed if any solution affecting the rights

of Palestine to be an independent Arab State is applied.

2. As regards the decision of the British Government recently announced to abandon the mandate over Palestine and to withdraw their troops and administration, and in view of the presence of the Zionist forces and terrorist organisations which threaten the safety of the Arabs of Palestine, the Council consider that the Arab States should take military precautions on the Palestine frontiers. Therefore, the Council suggest that it should be recommended to the Governments of the Arab States that they should proceed to take these military precautions and at the same time that States limitrophe to Palestine should facilitate the participation and co-operation of the non-limitrophe States.

3. As regards the execution of the previous decisions to give effective help to the Arabs of Palestine, the Council recommend to the Governments of the States members of the League that they should begin giving material and moral help to the Arabs of Palestine, in order to strengthen and encourage them in defending themselves and their existence; the Council also recommend to the States of the League that they should produce immediately the necessary funds for this purpose and that these funds should be spent under the supervision of a special committee."

E 11310/46/G

No. 14

## NOTE OF DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND MR. MARSHALL ON 24th NOVEMBER, 1947

There were also present the Minister of Defence, the American Ambassador and Sir Edmund Hall-Patch.

## Palestine

The Secretary of State referred to the most recent developments at the United Nations, particularly the latest intervention of Mr. Herschel Johnson in the Palestine Committee.

The Secretary of State read from telegram No. 3519 from the United Kingdom delegation, New York, as follows:—

A. Mr. Herschel Johnson had apparently accused His Majesty's Government of adopting an unhelpful attitude and of doing nothing to bridge the gap relating to enforcement in the partition plan.

B. He had stated that the United States delegation would not understand abstentions when the vote was taken.

The Secretary of State went on to say that there were indications of an American



attempt to stampede the Assembly both by pressure and by constant suggestion that when the time comes His Majesty's Government would not be able to avoid active co-operation with the United Nations Commission.

The Secretary of State outlined briefly recent developments in connexion with Palestine and explained the grave difficulties with which we had been faced and his disappointment at many turns in American policy. It seemed to him that this great issue had been handled more with the electoral situation in New York City in mind than the large issues of foreign policy which were involved. He wished to warn Mr. Marshall that anti-Semitism was growing in this country and that feelings ran high in the House of Commons. This situation had been brought to a head by the callous murder of the two British sergeants. Up to that time the Secretary of State had felt that the situation in Palestine might have been held, but since then the position had entirely changed. His Majesty's Government had taken the decision that they would withdraw from Palestine and, as regards the vote to be cast at the United Nations, he had already given instructions that the United Kingdom delegation was to abstain.

The Secretary of State said that he was distressed at the turn events were taking and he thought it deplorable that the United Kingdom were again being held up to ignominious abuse.

Mr. Marshall said that he realised fully that in many respects the United Kingdom had not been fairly treated in respect of Palestine. As far as he was concerned, he

had inherited a policy from his predecessors which he had had no part in formulating. He had, nevertheless, spoken in very strong terms to the Jews and left them in no doubt whatever of his attitude to their present activities. He had also made it clear to the Arabs that he would not give way to any blackmailing tactics on their part.

Mr. Marshall, however, wished to take strong exception to the final point made by the Secretary of State. There was no intention on his part of making things more difficult for the United Kingdom and he disliked that suggestion. What he sought to do was to reach, if possible, an orderly settlement. Palestine was an essential part of the Middle East and, unless a satisfactory settlement was reached there, any common policy in the Middle East would be much more difficult to achieve.

Mr. Douglas asked whether there was any evidence that the Jews who were being collected from Eastern Europe with a view to being smuggled into Palestine were indoctrinated Communists.

The Secretary of State replied that his information was to this effect.

Mr. Douglas pressed this point again and received the same reply.

The Secretary of State said he hoped that Mr. Marshall would be able to review the situation in the light of the explanations which he had given and that it would be possible for him to restrain Mr. Herschel Johnson from increasing our difficulties in Palestine.

E. L. HALL-PATCH.

25th November, 1947

E 11844/46/31

No. 15

## PALESTINE

Extract from House of Commons Debates, 12th December, 1947

Mr. Eden (Warwick and Leamington): Finally, a word to the Arabs, which I feel, perhaps, justified in uttering because, in 1940, I had something to do with proposals which led to closer unity between the Arab States. I would say this to them. If, at the twelfth hour, the Arabs were prepared to submit to the Assembly a plan for a Federal State—as they were—composed of Jewish and Arab cantons, is it too much to ask of them, in the interests of

peace and humanity, to go a step further and accommodate themselves to the new situation, and put an end, once and for all, to the strife and bloodshed which for ten years have torn asunder this land which, to Christian, Moslem and Jew alike, is sacred? I make a solemn appeal to all my Arab friends, sore at heart though they must be, to make this great effort in the interests of mankind.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Ernest Bevin): I join with the right hon. Member for Warwick and Leamington (Mr. Eden) in that great appeal. Both of us have had a good deal to do with this vexed and difficult problem. His appeal, which I endorse, and to which I will make reference again later—and, possibly, to things that might be done—will, I believe, be paid great regard in Palestine and in the neighbouring countries. May I express the hope that it will be paid the same regard in Great Britain, in New York, and outside; that they will not exacerbate and make more difficult the task that has to be seen through. The discussion which has taken place on this debate has been very helpful, and I admire its temper and its responsibility in the task we now have to see through.

I will, first of all, deal with the questions which have been raised both by the last speaker and by many others about the termination of the mandate. We have fixed, after the most careful consideration, the date of 15th May. That date was arrived at having regard to all the negotiations that have to be conducted. The transfer of power to the United Nations is not simply a matter of walking out of Palestine. They are members of the sterling area. There is the whole question of currency, trade and a variety of economic things, which I will not enumerate, but which have to be dealt with with very great care. In addition to the mere transference of power, one does not want to add to the chaos by economic disorder as well. When we examined all the things—which, I am sure, the House will not want me to go into in any detail—that had to be done to carry out an orderly transfer, we felt that if we fixed a date any earlier than 15th May, we might fall down on it, and that the transfer would not be complete. I must remind the House that, whatever one may think of the Government, there is in foreign affairs, to use the colloquial, "a pretty big plateful" of problems going on at the same time, and Palestine is only one of them. There are the East and Europe.

May I just put in a word for our officials? All the officials of the Government, particularly the higher officials, who have to deal with these intricate problems, are just being worked to death at the present moment. We had to take into

account all these things—available staff, experts, and everybody we could call on—in order to try to see whether we could make an orderly arrangement. If it is found that the negotiations on all these matters with the United Nations move more quickly than we think, and we can fix an earlier date, we shall do so. We should like to have accepted the suggested date in February, but we found it was physically impossible to do so, and we have had to tell the United Nations that fact. On the other hand, we have indicated to them—and this deals with the point about setting up the commission—that they must get on with the commission because 15th May is the last date. We are definitive on that, and, therefore, there can be no misunderstanding of our position. I think that clears up the point which the hon. and learned Member for Daventry (Mr. Manningham-Buller) raised last night.

Then, I have been asked whether the withdrawal of troops can be completed more speedily. Here, again, I know it is the usual method to have a shot at the War Office and other people about these things, but we really went into it with very great care, and we could not fix a date about which we could be definite without very great loss. After all that we have put into Palestine for the last thirty years, I cannot see why we should have a loss. I do not think we are entitled to lose anything at all. I do not believe there is any need. I must remind the House that we did build up great communications and, as everyone knows, there was a great base in Palestine. We cannot, and we ought not, to waste the taxpayers' money unnecessarily. Therefore, I do not anticipate trouble over that side of it. We think that by 1st August we can do it.

One of the things we have had to take into account is that we are pledged to this House to bring home 258,000 men, independent of these men, by 31st March. Shipping is a very great problem and the redeployment of these great forces is an enormous thing. I must say this, that in our balance of payments position one of the great handicaps which have been hindering our restoration is that this war was so world-wide, and we have had to use our shipping so long to get our stores back, and to get our men back, that we have not got our shipping back into an earning capacity as fast as we had hoped to do. This country is going through it



a little, and our having to turn extra shipping on to this problem in order to meet this date—together with what we are already committed to—does mean a very grave loss of earnings for the economy of this country in consequence.

Having told our forces that we were going to take them out under the demobilisation plan of 1948, and the dates having been given to the House, we had to try and work this scheme in without disappointing those we had already told we were going to take out. If it had been otherwise we would have had trouble in the army, because of the pledges given. So that 1st August, bearing all these facts in mind, and the associated facts and circumstances—the transport and the rest—was the very best date to which we could absolutely pledge ourselves. But here again, if circumstances arise in which we can speed this thing up to bring it earlier, we shall do it. The trouble was that we had to give a date to the United Nations. We had to give them a date which we could reasonably feel we could keep, and that is the reason for 1st August.

I have been asked to give fuller details of our plan for the various stages of the withdrawal. This is a military operation. It is a very delicate operation, and I am sure the House will agree with me that the detailed arrangements now being made to carry this out with the minimum risk of disturbance, and consequent loss of life, are not a proper subject for discussion. We may vary our arrangements. We have a plan at the moment, but I was asked only yesterday if I could vary that plan, and I have referred to the Chiefs of Staff for advice. It may be varied as we go along. I do not know, and I would ask the House not to press me for any details as to what we are going to do under the military circumstances.

Another point which has been raised is the question of immigration. I am not mentioning every Member who raised it, because I was not here yesterday and I have had to try to get out the points. There is no obligation upon us to change the immigration quota during the short remaining period in which we shall be responsible in Palestine. Here I want to make an appeal to the Jews. If this were done, or if any attempt were made to bring in numbers of immigrants, in spite of our control, and so cause trouble, in my view this would be another and most important contribution to unrest. At a critical

moment of this kind I hope that common-sense will prevail.

Our hope is that the question will be considered in a statesmanlike manner, and that we may be able to hand over to the authority which succeeds us without having to deal with any further trouble on this score. My view is that if the British navy and the British army, in addition to trying to keep order during the transition period between now and when we go, are called upon to have rows at Haifa and Tel-Aviv with immigrant ships arriving, it will do the Jewish cause more harm throughout the world than anything else that could happen. It will be regarded as a provocative act, and I say to them advisedly that, in my view, they should leave this matter alone until the State is set up, and should deal with it then.

Between now and the withdrawal we do expect to clear Cyprus. We must do that. We cannot have illegal immigrants on British territory after that time, and we will negotiate with the United Nations Commission in order to see that all that is arranged.

I was asked a question about the Arab Legion. I should explain that this is a force which owes allegiance to the King of Transjordan, but units of it have, for some time, been serving under the orders of the British G.O.C. in accordance with a long-standing arrangement with King Abdulla. It has been decided that all these units will be withdrawn from Palestine at the same time as the withdrawal of the British forces. That withdrawal will be completed when the withdrawal of the British forces is completed. I think that that meets the question raised by the right hon. Member for Warwick and Leamington (Mr. Eden) and the hon. and learned Member for Daventry (Mr. Manningham-Buller), and also some Members on this side of the House who raised it yesterday. I have been asked also that we should take proper care not to leave materials of war in Palestine. We are giving priority to the removing of implements of war from Palestine. We shall not leave any dangerous toys behind after 1st August.

The hon. and learned Member for Daventry last night quoted the report on the question of voting in the proposed Arab and Jewish States. He did not think that the report clearly established the right of Arabs to vote in the Jewish State or of Jews to vote in the Arab State. I have looked this up again and on the revised

report—and the document by which the future United Nations Commission will be guided is the revised text approved by the General Assembly on 29th November—and this text provides for the elections to the Constituent Assembly of States as follows:—

“The election regulations in each State shall be drawn up by the Provisional Council of Government and approved by the commission. Qualified voters for each State for this election shall be persons over 18 years of age who are (a) Palestinian citizens residing in that State, and (b) Arabs and Jews residing in the State, although not Palestinian citizens, who, before voting, have signed a notice of intention to become citizens of such State.”

So I think the position is quite clear that they all have a vote. In fact, one of my arguments in these discussions about federal States and cantonisation and so on has been much on the lines of that of the hon. Member for Central Hackney (Mr. H. Hynd) this morning. I cannot believe that when these States are set up everybody will vote either as Jews or Arabs. Some of them might even be Conservatives or Liberals, and the rest Socialists or Communists; I cannot tell, but I do not think that ultimately they will vote strictly according to religion or race. I do not think they ever do, certainly not if they follow Western methods. I cannot answer if they follow other methods. The other qualification is that no discrimination of any kind shall be made between the inhabitants on the grounds of race, religion, language or sex. Accordingly, I think we have covered the ground so far as providing a democratic basis for the States is concerned.

I very much welcome the contributions which have been made by hon. members in this debate and the tributes that have been paid to the achievements of the British Administration and police in Palestine, a great number of whom have made the supreme sacrifice in the course of their duties. I associate myself and His Majesty's Government with those tributes. Many devoted public servants have spent the greater part of their lives in that service, in building up the country in very difficult circumstances. Certainly those with whom I have been associated have really wanted to make a success of that great task but, owing to racial and

religious difficulties, they could not get the roots of the administration into the people. That was not their fault and, in spite of that, they have done a great job. From time to time they have been subject to considerable unjust criticism, and we are under a great obligation to them.

The question has been asked what sort of treatment they will get now that their careers are cut short. I am authorised to say that they will receive adequate compensation. I cannot make a detailed announcement at this stage—the question will have to be gone into—but I assure the House that in winding up the affairs of the Palestine Government, His Majesty's Government will make it their duty to ensure that those whose careers are personally affected will get a square deal. As a member of the Government making this pledge, I am fortified by the knowledge that there will be plenty of hon. members in this House to hold me to it if there is any attempt to depart from it. In any case, I think it is a case of “penny wise and pound foolish” if, in doing a job of this sort, we are mean in our treatment of people whose careers we have to interrupt. So far as I am concerned, that will be the spirit in which I shall deal with this problem.

One of the criticisms which have been levelled against us has been that we allowed two years to elapse before reaching the decision to lay down the mandate. I welcome this opportunity of answering that criticism. We have been told that solutions could obviously have been imposed at an earlier stage. I have always believed, and I believe now, that in dealing with other people the method of riding roughshod is wrong. It does not succeed. In Palestine we were faced with an accumulation of bitterness and hostility. If at any time since the present Government came into office, since the end of the war, we had attempted to coerce Arabs in the interest of Jews, or Jews in the interest of Arabs, we should have set alight a conflagration for which we were not prepared to accept the responsibility. I am quite convinced that in view of the great and difficult problems, which the right hon. Member for Warwick and Leamington (Mr. Eden) appreciates as well as I do, the starting of a conflagration in the Middle East would have been a disaster for the world. I was not prepared to do it, and I do not apologise for not having done it. I believe that the right thing to



do is to try to get agreement. Had the British Administration been left unfettered to handle this problem, as it ought to have been, without interference from others in other countries, I quite believe that we should have been successful. I say that emphatically. Over and over again we got very near to a solution, only to have the cup dashed from our lips. It is bitter to have to face this situation now.

I wish to say this on the subject of war: Any fool can start one. It does not take a very clever man to start a war, but it takes an awful lot of work to clear it up after there has been one. Having been on this job for months and months, and having studied the problem in all its aspects, I think that the Arab feeling on this question has been underestimated. It has got to be assessed at its correct value by everybody, or we shall not get a peaceful settlement of this problem. It is because I want it assessed at its proper value that I do not want the Arabs to be dismissed as if they were nobody, and as if one has only got to do this, that or the other and everything will be all right. That is not the way to treat this vexed and very serious problem.

Let us assume for a moment that we had gone to the United Nations without allowing the two years to elapse. What would have been said to us? Two conditions would have arisen. First of all, we should have been asked, "Have you tried to settle it yourself as the Charter lays down?" We tried. Secondly, let us assume that we had tried to impose a settlement by force, or alternatively, that we had proposed a trusteeship. The interested States would then have had to be consulted. Either one of them could have taken us to the Security Council for having endangered peace and security in the world, and we should have been before the United Nations not as voluntarily laying down the Mandate in the manner that we have done, but accused of disturbing the peace of the world. Such was the situation as between Jew and Arab that I did not think that course would contribute to a final and satisfactory solution.

The other accusation is that I turned down the report of the Anglo-American Committee. Was there ever a more outrageous and inaccurate statement than that? Why do hon. members make that accusation? They know it is not true. What happened was that I got the Cabinet

to agree to the Anglo-American Committee's report. I said that if they came to a unanimous decision I would accept it and would recommend the Cabinet to accept it also. But what happened?

The United States would take only one point—100,000 immigrants—and the Jews would take only one point. And I was not prepared to accept the report of an Anglo-American commission on one point and discard the other nine which were vital to its success. That any Member of this House—especially a Member of my own party—should make these accusations against his colleague without foundation is, I think, most unfortunate. I hope I have cleared that up.

The second thing we did was to convene the conference on the Morrison plan. Indeed, if one takes the majority decision that they are now operating, it will be seen that they have had to have an economic council for the whole territory. I have never yet been able to see how a little country like that, with railways, post, telegraph and the rest, can be economically run and can be made viable if divided. This is not a question of prejudice or anything like that; it is merely a question of how you are going to make a viable State, and the United Nations have had, in an indirect way, to come to the same kind of conclusion as the Morrison plan—or what was afterwards modified and called the Bevin plan. In fact, you have to have something in that form.

I am not going, and His Majesty's Government are not going, to oppose the United Nations decision. The decision has been taken. As someone has said we have tried out best. We have no intention of opposing that decision, but we cannot ourselves undertake, either individually or collectively in association with others, to impose that decision by force. We have been in this country over thirty years and, whatever we do, if we use British forces now, we shall be in a very difficult position. Therefore we have made it perfectly clear, as the Secretary of State for the Colonies said in his statement on the first day, what our position is, and that we adhere to.

*Mr. Warbey (Luton):* Can we be quite clear on that point? Do I understand from what the Foreign Secretary has just said that if the Security Council were to decide that collective enforcement action was necessary in respect of Palestine, this

country would not take its share as one of the members of the United Nations?

*Mr. Bevin:* That is what the hon. member must understand. It is for the Security Council to lay down itself how they will find the forces, and the form of the forces, but I cannot use British organised forces nor can I be a party at the present moment, with security forces as a whole not yet organised in the United Nations, of putting British forces under other commands. When the scheme is finally worked out of what this United Nations force is to be, what its command is to be, and what its obligations are to be, not only in Palestine but as part of the international set-up, then we will take our corner, but to put British forces under another command in this way in an isolated instance is a thing we are not prepared to do.

We feel we have done our best and the problem of enforcement must be left to others. While we remain responsible for the mandate, we shall do everything in our power to prevent things getting out of hand in Palestine as a result of the bitterness between the two communities there. In addition, I have, on behalf of His Majesty's Government—and will continue to do so—impressed upon all those principally concerned, whether Arab or Jew, the grave responsibilities which they have and the necessity to keep their feelings under control, to avoid any form of incitement, to prevent loss of life and unnecessary damage to the economy and future of Palestine. I think in any attempt to fight it out they will do more damage to each other than they will gain. In saying this I cannot minimise the bitterness, the very real bitterness, in Palestine to-day. In spite of our efforts, that bitterness has grown over the last thirty years.

Of course, the Palestine problem might have evolved differently and might have evolved to a satisfactory solution if it had not been for Hitler. The Hitler régime, as someone said this morning, naturally created an intensified Jew consciousness because of the persecution and the bitterness that went on. It threw upon the British administration, as a result of that persecution, a task which was multiplied many times. The evolutionary character of the National Home was destroyed and hence the difficulty arose. But I must say this. It could have been easier. It can be eased now by the United

Nations if they will take a decision I have pleaded for over and over again. Even now they have taken their decision on Palestine—with which I am not going to quarrel or criticise—that does not solve the Jewish problem in Europe. Yet it requires such a comparatively small effort on the part of the countries of the world, if they took their proper quota and helped to clear this thing up once and for all, in addition to the numbers who might go into Palestine in the ordinary way.

If I may say so, I think this country has been placed in a very invidious position to be lectured and cajoled as to what we ought to do about Palestine, when the doors of other countries had not been thrown open to these people to assist them in this terrible tragedy they have had to go through. Even now, I say it would be one of the contributory factors towards peace and easement and the prevention of blood-letting if the immigration doors are opened. In any circumstances, even when you take the total number that is put forward, Palestine cannot find a way to solving this problem. The task of the army and the others at the end, when the mandate is handed over, will be to protect themselves in the withdrawal. They must get out at the date I have mentioned. I think I have dealt with all the questions.

Britain has a great record in the Middle East. Since the first World War these Arab States have been created. I do not give credit to my own party alone for what Britain has done. I believe, after reading all the papers and all the records of the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office concerning this problem, that it has been the great desire of every Government of this country from 1917 till now to create an independent State of Palestine, in the hope that these two Semitic races, different in religion yet common in origin, could find a way to live together, and that within this arrangement, within Palestine, they could find a way to contribute to the new development of the Arab and Jewish organisms in the Middle East. No doubt the Jews could have brought great abilities and organising capacity. The Arabs, having found their freedom, need it. If only Jews and Arabs could get over this racial difficulty.

This country has found scientists, experts, technicians, all kinds of people to try to build up the Middle East, not merely as a strategic centre, but as a centre in which a new social order and



development might take place. Great irrigation schemes now have been worked out, and, I am happy to say, are being started in the various parts of the Middle East, which in time, when completed, will rate with the T.V.A. scheme in America. All this great preliminary scientific, engineering and other work has been going on with our assistance, and in the end will contribute to a higher standard of life for the masses of people, whose life has not changed very much for 1,000 years, but who have a new-found nationalism, a new impulse urging them on to catch up with Western civilisation. Britain has played a very great part in that work. I can only hope that this difficulty between the Arabs and Jews will not conflict with that beneficent task. I hope the great friendship for both of them, which has been historically associated with this country, will continue, and I sincerely hope that the passing shadows may finally be dispelled, and that we can succeed in bringing the Arabs and Jews together.

I agree with the right hon. Member for Warwick and Leamington that anyone who tries now to go out with some proposal for Arabs and Jews to meet, is bound to be disappointed. On the other hand, there is the United Nations' decision. There it is, with no one intending to challenge it, no one intending to turn back on that judgment. There is that decision of that world organism, whether we agree with it or not. It is on the statute book of that great organisation. May it be possible to implement it. If it is, and if my colleagues or I can render any assistance, with advice, with help, with our officials, with our administrative ability, with our historical knowledge, to smooth out the transition, to try to prevent the divisions from being widened—in other words to do anything possible to promote concord, friendship and amity between these peoples—we shall do it.

That is the principle and policy we shall follow. The decision having been taken, I hope that nothing will be said in this country by press or public which will make more difficult the task of ending this

age-old controversy, of bringing these two great peoples together, and of ushering into the Middle East a co-operative effort, instead of the long, long strife that has embittered it in the past.

*Sir W. Smithers:* The right hon. gentleman has not been able to give any considered opinion on the enclave round Jerusalem and the holy places with access to the sea. Will he give an assurance that he will look into that and do all he can to persuade the United Nations organisation to do so?

*Mr. Bevin:* I did not refer to that because it is clearly set out in the report, and it was referred to by the right hon. gentleman opposite. I think it is quite clear. I forgot to mention it. I was asked whether we were tendering advice and so on. Sir Alan Burns of the Colonial Office, a great expert, is on the Committee rendering assistance.

*Mr. Janner:* Will my right hon. friend answer some of the questions I put to him at the end of my speech yesterday? They are practical questions. The first one was whether it is true that the civil guard that is being formed is not being given arms, while members of Haganah are being arrested because they have got arms to protect the Jews? Another question was, Does he intend to open a port shortly?

*Mr. Bevin:* I cannot agree to open a port until we lay down the mandate. We cannot have two administrations at one time. Really, it is impossible. I had better be quite frank about these things. I do not want to get into conflict with the Jews, and I hope the Jews will not get into conflict with His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's navy or army. It is a little patience that is required. There are but a few months to pass before we lay down the mandate. As to the other point about arming, I am not conversant with the details, but I do not think it is right for us to begin arming anybody in Palestine—either side. [An hon. member: "We are arming the Arabs."] I do not know that we have armed anybody at all.

## SYRIA AND THE PALESTINE QUESTION

*Mr. Dundas to Mr. Bevin. (Received 15th December)*

(No. 143)  
Sir,

*Damascus,  
3rd December, 1947*

With reference to my telegram No. 532 of 29th November and subsequent telegrams reporting events in Damascus after the United Nations' decision in favour of partition in Palestine, I have the honour to report that investigation has shown that the Syrian Government were largely responsible for organising and directing the demonstrations. For this purpose the Government made use of agents amongst the teachers, the Ulema, the Ikhwan el Muslimeen and the leaders of the various city quarters. It is probable that the particular attention paid to the Communist Party headquarters and the premises of the Friends of Soviet Russia was instigated by the Ikhwan el Muslimeen, who, as I have previously reported, have for some time shown marked anti-Communist activities.

As soon as I learnt without doubt that the Government was encouraging the demonstrators I pointed out to Muhsin Barazi, the Minister of the Interior, that his Government were playing with fire by allowing disorderly crowds to roam the streets and pressed him to take the necessary steps to prevent demonstrations taking place. Yesterday, after learning that Sir Zafarallah Khan had reminded the Syrian Government that their first duty was to govern, I sent Ibrahim Bey Debbas, the Oriental Adviser on the legation staff, to Aref Hamza, the right-hand man of the Prime Minister, to persuade him that no useful purpose could be served by a continuation of the strikes and disturbances, a fact which the Government had already begun to realise. Aref Bey promised he would himself personally visit various quarter leaders to ensure that the town reopened to-day and that the students would return to their lessons. He has been as good as his word.

There is no doubt, however, that feeling in both Damascus and Homs, from which town I have a first hand report from a British subject who has lived there for the past four years, is running high and that the more fanatical elements are entirely determined to take physical action to destroy the Jews in Palestine. It is this fanatical element which may represent a real danger to British lives and property in the future. While perhaps it is natural that the Americans and Russians should have received the brunt of the first demonstrations, it seems probable that there will be an increasing tendency in the press and in public opinion to blame Great Britain on the grounds that His Majesty's Government were originally responsible by the Balfour declaration for the present decision and have for the past twenty-five years allowed Jewish immigration into Palestine. I feel, therefore, that it is likely that anti-British feeling will gather weight in Syria and that some incident may set off renewed demonstrations which this time would have the British as their main objective. For instance, any action by British security forces in Palestine directed against the Arabs and resulting in loss of Arab lives might easily lead to immediate reprisals against the British in this country.

Apart from the report of the acting-consul in Aleppo, transmitted to you in my telegram No. 537 of 1st December, I have not learnt of any action in Syria directed against Jews or Jewish property.

I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives in Aleppo, Beirut, Jerusalem and to the British Middle East office.

I have, &c.

C. A. F. DUNDAS.



## DEMONSTRATION IN CAIRO AGAINST THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE

*Sir R. Campbell to Mr. Bevin. (Received 21st December)*

(No. 177. Saving) *Cairo,*  
(Telegraphic) *17th December, 1947*  
My telegram No. 2267 [of 5th December :  
Anti-partition demonstrations].

A mass demonstration, authorised by the Government and said to be one of the largest ever held in Egypt, was organised on 14th December by the Higher Committee of the Nile Valley Group to Save Palestine. Following the midday prayers, the demonstrators, estimated by the press to number some hundred thousand, proceeded in orderly fashion from the Azhar to Opera Square, shouting slogans against Zionism and partition of Palestine. Speeches were made to the crowd from the terrace of the Continental Hotel by Saleh Harb, Riad el Solh, the Emir Feisal, Jamil Mardam, a sheikh and a Coptic priest. The speakers emphasised that every effort would be made to keep Palestine Arab and independent, and that she would be furnished with all the arms, money, material and men she may need. The demonstrators then proceeded to Abdin Palace shouting: "We want

weapons to start the struggle!" "Down with America, the Imperialists!" "Down with Britain and Russia!" "Down with the Jews!" Representatives of various groups wrote their names in the King's book, and the crowd then dispersed.

2. Elaborate precautions had been taken by the security authorities and no incidents were reported.

3. According to the press, prominent members of this committee (which has recently been formed) include:—

Ali Maher.  
Hafez Ramadan.  
Sheikh Hassanein Maklout.  
Hilmi Issa.  
Maitre Omar Omar.  
Saleh Harb.  
Mustafa Momem.  
Makram Ebeid.  
Fuad Abaza.  
(Mufti of Egypt.)  
Tewfik Doss.  
Maurice Archache.  
Hassan el Banna.

E 12233/951/31

No. 18

## CONVERSATION WITH THE IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER

*Palestine*

*Mr. Bevin to Mr. Busk (Bagdad)*

(No. 411) *Foreign Office,*  
Sir, *23rd December, 1947*

I received the Iraqi Foreign Minister on 19th December. He had just arrived in London from New York on his way back to Bagdad.

2. Dr. Jamali began by speaking in terms of intense indignation of the decision by the Assembly on the partition of Palestine. He wished to recall that when I had informed him earlier in the year of the decision to refer the question of Palestine to the United Nations he had expressed

his grave misgivings of the impartiality of that institution. He now felt that his worst fears had been justified. The representatives of the Arab countries had witnessed the spectacle of an international body which was supposed to base its decisions on justice being swayed by partisan feeling and political combinations. He blamed the United States Government, which at the last moment had, he maintained, blatantly influenced the votes of otherwise reluctant States in favour of partition.

3. I told Dr. Jamali that when I saw Nuri Pasha on 11th December he had said that he hoped that His Majesty's Government would lay down the mandate and complete their withdrawal from Palestine at the earliest possible moment; it was only when the Jews and the Arabs were left to confront each other directly that any solution could now be reached. Nuri Pasha felt that conciliation at some stage was now the only way out. I told Dr. Jamali that His Majesty's Government were prepared at any time to persist in the process of conciliation if they could helpfully do so. I regretted that during the last discussions with His Majesty's Government in London the Arabs had, like the Jews, refused to accept any of the compromise proposals which His Majesty's Government had put before both parties. I knew full well how difficult the Jews were to deal with, and it was the intervention of the New York Zionists which had wrecked any chances of final agreement at that time. But the Arabs had not been willing to make a sufficient advance either.

4. I reminded Dr. Jamali that I had made it clear in my statement in the House of Commons on 12th December that His Majesty's Government would not hand over to the United Nations Commission until the termination of the mandate and had stated that His Majesty's Government would not make a port available to the Jews for immigration before that date. He expressed his appreciation.

5. Dr. Jamali went on, however, to say that in his view there was no legal basis for the decision of the Assembly and the United Nations Commission had no legal right to take over responsibility in Palestine. It followed that His Majesty's Government had no right to hand over authority to them. The United Nations only had the right to adopt one of two courses, either to declare Palestine independent or to place it under trusteeship. I reminded him that I had at an earlier stage proposed trusteeship to both Jews and Arabs, but neither had accepted. I did not pursue further the question of the legality of the decision of the Assembly.

6. Dr. Jamali emphasised that the Arab countries were looking to His Majesty's Government to help them and to give them guidance.

7. I repeated that His Majesty's Government were prepared to assist in attempts to reach a solution by conciliation if that should prove at any stage possible. I went on to say that once we were quit of the embarrassing commitments of the mandate, which might have led us into increasing friction with Middle East countries, our hands would be freer to pursue a policy towards the Middle East as a whole.

8. As he was leaving Dr. Jamali raised the question of the future of Libya. I told him that we were bearing fully in mind the interest of Arab countries in this question.

I am, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

E 12248/951/31

No. 19

## CONVERSATION WITH THE LEBANESE MINISTER

*Palestine*

*Mr. Bevin to Mr. Houstoun-Boswall (Beirut)*

(No. 252) *Foreign Office,*  
Sir, *24th December, 1947*

The Lebanese Minister called on me yesterday to make his first official visit after presenting his letters. This had been delayed owing to his absence for the last few months at the General Assembly and on a tour of South America.

2. Dr. Khouri had no special communication to make to me, but he spoke at some length about the Palestine question and the great disillusionment of the Arab States at the way in which this question had been

handled by the General Assembly, and more particularly by the United States, against whom there was a very real bitterness among the Arab delegation and the Arab peoples. Dr. Khouri quoted in particular instances of which he claimed to have first-hand information in which certain of the delegations, e.g., the Filipino and Haiti delegations, had been compelled by the United States Administration under the strongest pressure to modify their views and vote with the United States delegation.



3. Dr. Khouri felt convinced that only the Soviet Union could profit from recent developments in Palestine and from the decision of the General Assembly. He spoke of Communist influence among Zionists in Palestine and said that he and his Government were most anxious that British relations with the Arab States should not be embittered as a result of the Palestine dispute.

4. I informed Dr. Khouri that we hoped to have an opportunity in the coming weeks to discuss the whole position with our various Arab friends and impressed upon him the importance in the meanwhile, in the Arab interest as much as in the general interest, of the Arab Governments using all their influence to avoid fanning the flames of strife and unrest in Palestine.

I am, &c.

ERNEST BEVIN.

E 416/4/31

No. 20

### THE PALESTINE QUESTION AT THE SECOND ANNUAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 1947)

It seemed doubtful, when the Assembly met, whether a two-thirds majority could be obtained for the plan of partition recommended by the majority of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (U.N.S.C.O.P.). It was evident that the United States Government would be obliged to give at least general support to the plan, and its influence would be considerable. But Russo-American relations, as revealed in the opening stages of the Assembly, were such as to offer little prospect of co-operation between the Slav bloc and the United States in relation to Palestine. Thus the Arab Delegations, assured of practically solid support from the representatives of Asia, had good hopes of securing more than a third of the votes cast and so of blocking the plan. They were under no illusion as to the chances of of their own counter-proposal for a unitary Palestinian State with a permanent Arab majority and constitutional safeguards for the Jewish minority.

2. The United Kingdom Delegation were instructed to take no direct part in the settlement of this issue. They were to confine themselves to defining the limits of British participation in implementing any plan, and to impressing upon the Assembly the consequent need to provide for an alternative means of enforcement as an integral part of any recommendation they might adopt.

3. In accordance with this decision, the Colonial Secretary made a statement on the 26th September, at the second meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Palestinian question. The following is an extract from this statement:—

"His Majesty's Government are not themselves prepared to undertake the

task of imposing a policy in Palestine by force of arms. Likewise, in considering any proposal to the effect that His Majesty's Government should participate with others in the enforcement of a settlement, they must take into account both the inherent justice of the settlement and the extent to which force would be required to give effect to it. . . . In order that there may be no misunderstanding of the attitude and policy of the United Kingdom, I have been instructed by His Majesty's Government to announce with all solemnity that they have. . . . decided that in the absence of a settlement they must plan for an early withdrawal of British forces and of the British administration from Palestine. . . . If. . . . no basis of consent for a settlement can be found, it seems to me of the highest importance that any recommendations made by the General Assembly should be accompanied by a clear definition of the means by which they are to be carried out."

4. This statement was followed by several days of general debate, in the course of which two themes recurred with particular frequency. There was a general concern with the plight of Europe's displaced persons, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, and almost all speakers expressed a desire to initiate action on their behalf, although there was a division between those who felt that a beginning should be made by settling Jews in Palestine and those who wished the problem to be treated as a whole without specific reference to Palestine. It also became clear at this stage that the partition plan was made more attractive to a number of delegations

by the provision for an economic union of the three parts into which it would divide the country politically. Several speakers expressed a conviction, or a hope, that enforced economic collaboration would lead in the long run to voluntary political collaboration.

5. It was not until the 11th October that the attitude of the United States was disclosed in a speech by Mr. Herschel Johnson. Subject to certain reservations, he supported the plan of the U.N.S.C.O.P. majority. Turning to the problem of its implementation, he first remarked that the Assembly, by admitting the future government of Palestine to its agenda, had not thereby undertaken to assume responsibility for administering the country during its transition to independence. "The present responsibility for administration rested with the mandatory Power." He added, however, that the United States Government was willing to participate "in any United Nations plan designed to assist the parties involved" to establish a political settlement in Palestine. He explained that he had in mind assistance, through the United Nations, "in meeting economic and financial problems and also the problem of internal law and order during the transition period." The latter "might require the establishment of a special constabulary or police force recruited on a volunteer basis by the United Nations." He would not assume that any account need be taken of the possibility of a threat to the proposed settlement from outside Palestine.

There was no hint in this speech of any recognition by the United States Government that a new administration might be required in Palestine if partition were to be carried into effect. All it appeared to offer was economic and financial assistance to the mandatory Power, with possibly the more dubious assistance of an international constabulary.

6. At the next meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, on the 13th October, M. Tsarapkin spoke for the Soviet Union. He also supported in principle the partition proposal of the U.N.S.C.O.P. majority. He recognised that there was likely to be a gap between the termination of the existing mandate and the establishment of the two independent States, and posed the problem of the governing authority during this period, without however offering any solution.

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M. Tsarapkin's speech opened with an interesting passage on the subject of self-determination. "In the circumstances," he said, "juridical and historical argument should play only a secondary part. . . . The essence of the question was the right of self-determination of hundreds of thousands of Jews and Arabs living in Palestine. . . . The Jewish people were striving to create a State of their own; and it would be unjust to deny them this right. . . . Every people. . . . had full right to demand that its fate should not depend on the mercy or goodwill of a particular State." It was subsequently pointed out by Camille Bey Chamoun (Lebanon) that this doctrine could be applied with equal justification, and perhaps with dangerous consequences, to other minorities elsewhere.

7. In the closing stages of the general debate, on the 16th October, the Colonial Secretary intervened again. In this speech he said:

"It seems to us essential that in determining the nature of a settlement the Assembly should also determine the measures to implement it. It would be unreasonable to ask His Majesty's Government to carry the sole and full responsibility for the administration of Palestine and for enforcing changes which the United Nations regard as necessary. . . . My Government desire that it should be clear beyond all doubt and ambiguity that not only is it our decision to wind up the mandate but that within a limited period we shall withdraw. . . . If the Assembly should recommend a policy which is not acceptable to the Jews and Arabs, some authority alternative to the United Kingdom must be provided in order to implement the United Nations policy."

8. Shortly after this statement, the *Ad Hoc* Committee appointed three sub-committees, the first to examine and report on the U.N.S.C.O.P. majority plan, the second to work in the same way on the Arab counter-proposal, and the third to explore the possibility of conciliation. This last sub-committee was to consist in the first instance of the Chairman of the *Ad Hoc* Committee (Dr. Evatt), its Vice-Chairman (Prince Svasti of Siam) and its *Rapporteur* (M. Thor Thors of Iceland). The two others were to be nominated by the chairman from those delegations which did not signify their unwillingness to serve. Dr. Evatt found his freedom of choice severely



limited by this right of delegations to opt out of the sub-committees. He was nevertheless criticised for his action in composing them almost exclusively of partisans of the policies they were called upon to consider. The membership was as follows:

*Sub-Committee I.*—Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, Poland, South Africa, United States, U.S.S.R., Uruguay and Venezuela.

*Sub-Committee II.*—Afghanistan, Colombia, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen.

The United Kingdom Delegation was represented by an observer on each of the two sub-committees.

9. When these lists became known, the United States Delegation sought to persuade Dr. Evatt to add to the membership of Sub-Committee I two States which had not pronounced themselves in favour of partition. This effort failed, and a subsequent request from Sub-Committee II for the replacement of two of its Arab members by two "neutrals" was also rejected. The delegate for Colombia—the only "neutral" appointed to either sub-committee—thereupon resigned; he was not replaced. As a result of this procedure the *Ad Hoc* Committee was faced, when it reassembled, with two reports which respectively reproduced in an uncompromising form the proposals of the Arab States and the partition plan of the U.N.S.C.O.P. majority. The recommendation of the U.N.S.C.O.P. minority for a federal State was never seriously considered.

10. The one-sidedness of the two sub-committees was further accentuated by their own procedural decisions. The Jewish agency for Palestine was invited to participate fully—apart from the right to vote, a restriction which proved in practice to be unimportant—in the work of Sub-Committee I, and actually played a major part in its discussions. The Arab Higher Committee, which refused an invitation to present its views on detailed aspects of partition to Sub-Committee I, was continually consulted by Sub-Committee II.

11. Public attention was concentrated on the first sub-committee, and in particular on its approach to the problem of enforcement arising from the decisions of His Majesty's Government. The first proposal for dealing with this problem came from the United States Delegation. It amounted simply to reducing the period

of transition before the two proposed States became independent, from the two years suggested by the U.N.S.C.O.P. majority to a much shorter period calculated with reference to the time which would be required for the evacuation of British forces. Under this proposal the two States were to become independent on the 1st July, 1948. All the preparations for their establishment would thus have to be completed before that date. It was assumed that His Majesty's Government would retain the mandate for an approximately equivalent period. As mandatory they would be responsible for law and order. Thus the gap left in the U.N.S.C.O.P. majority plan by the British decision to withdraw would disappear, and British forces would after all be compelled to allow partition to be carried out under their protection.

12. Alternative proposals were submitted by the Soviet Union and Guatemala. The whole question was referred by the sub-committee to a "working group," consisting of the representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union, Guatemala and Canada. Differences arose in this group between the Soviet and American Delegations, the former desiring: (a) earlier dates for the termination of the mandate and the withdrawal of British troops; and (b) a major rôle for the Security Council in the execution of the Assembly's recommendations. Mr. Pearson of Canada set himself to reconcile these differences, and was assisted by the evident readiness of the Soviet Delegation to make important concessions rather than jeopardise the two-thirds majority for partition. They eventually gave way on the dates for British withdrawal; they compromised on the part to be played by the Security Council; and they subsequently raised no objection to the assignment of responsibility for Jerusalem to the Trusteeship Council.

13. On the 13th November, Sir Alexander Cadogan provided Sub-Committee I with further information on the intentions of His Majesty's Government. Distinguishing between military and administrative withdrawal, he announced that our authorities had been instructed to plan for the evacuation of troops to be completed by the 1st August, 1948. He continued:

"So long as British troops remain in any part of Palestine, they must of course maintain law and order in the

areas of which they remain in occupation. I am instructed, however, to make it clear that British troops would not be available as the instrument for the enforcement of a settlement in Palestine against either Arabs or Jews.

"The fact that it would be impracticable to withdraw the last military contingents from Palestine before next summer does not by any means imply that we shall continue to maintain a civil administration in Palestine throughout the intervening period. On the contrary, we reserve the right to lay down the mandate and to bring our civil administration to an end at any time after it has become evident that no settlement acceptable to both Jews and Arabs has been reached by the Assembly.

"In that event there would be an interval between the termination of the mandate and the withdrawal of the last British troops. . . . It follows, and I think it my duty to the sub-committee to remove any doubt upon this point without further delay, that if a United Nations commission were at work in Palestine taking preparatory steps for a settlement which would require enforcement it must not expect British authorities either to exercise administrative responsibility or to maintain law and order except in the limited areas of which they would necessarily remain in occupation during the process of withdrawal."

This statement threw into relief the gap in the programme of implementation on which the working group had at that time agreed. Nor did they succeed in closing the gap when they reconsidered and revised their draft in the light of the new data provided by Sir Alexander Cadogan.

14. The reports of the sub-committees were presented to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the 19th November. The chairman stated that the group concerned with conciliation had done everything possible to bring the parties to an agreement, but that there seemed to be little prospect of success. It was subsequently revealed by Faris el-Khoury (Syria), speaking in the General Assembly, that Dr. Evatt had written to Prince Feisal and to Mr. Marshall, suggesting a meeting between them as a first step towards conciliation; that Prince Feisal had at once replied accepting the invitation; and that he had received no answer to his letter.

15. Sub-Committee II presented three draft recommendations, dealing respectively with a number of legal issues involved in the consideration of Palestine's future, with the re-settlement of Jewish displaced persons and refugees, and with the Arab plan for the constitution of Palestine.

Of the legal questions, the most interesting was that relating to the competence of the Assembly to enforce or recommend the enforcement of partition. The sub-committee's proposal that the International Court of Justice should be asked to give an advisory opinion on this question was, by a motion of the French Delegation, isolated from their other proposals for reference to the court and voted on separately. It was defeated by 21 votes to 20. The remainder of the legal resolution was defeated by 25 votes to 18.

The resolution concerning Jewish refugees and displaced persons, which proposed the establishment of a special committee of the Assembly to recommend a scheme of quotas for re-settlement in the territories of member States, received 16 votes with 16 against, and did not go forward to the Assembly.

The third resolution of Sub-Committee II, based on the Arab plan for the constitution of Palestine as a unitary States, was defeated by 29 votes to 12, with 14 abstentions.

16. Sub-Committee I presented a report which amounted to an amended version of the U.N.S.C.O.P. majority recommendations, together with new proposals for the supervision of the establishment of the Arab and Jewish States and the special régime for Jerusalem. Of the amendments to the U.N.S.C.O.P. plan, the most important affected the boundary between the Arab and Jewish States. The Jews obtained additional territory both in Galilee and to the south and east of Beisan. In Samaria and Judea, two groups of Arab villages were transferred to the Arab State, leaving however a large part of their lands in the Jewish State.<sup>(1)</sup> A strip of territory to the west and north-west of Lydda, containing the airport, was transferred to the Jewish State. The town of Jaffa was excluded from the Jewish State and constituted into an enclave belonging

<sup>(1)</sup> It is to be noted, however, that a Netherlands amendment adopted by the *Ad Hoc* Committee increases the discretion of the United Nations Commission in demarcating the frontier, and instructs it not to divide village areas "unless pressing reasons make that necessary."



to the Arab State. There was an exchange of territory on the coastal plain north and south of Gaza; this, together with an extension of the frontier of the Jewish State northwards along the western shore of the Dead Sea, gave it two areas in which there was believed to be a prospect of petroleum production. At a later stage the *Ad Hoc* Committee accepted a proposal concerted by the United States Delegation with the Jewish agency, for the transfer to Arab hands of Beersheba town and of a strip of almost entirely desert land along the Egyptian frontier. The principal effects of these frontier changes were:

- (a) To reduce the size of the Arab minority in the Jewish State by approximately 80,000. (The revised estimate for the population of the Jewish State is 498,000 Jews, 405,000 Arabs and others.)
- (b) To increase the proportions allocated to the Jewish State of both irrigated land and land under citrus. (The U.N.S.C.O.P. plan gave the Jews 83 per cent. of the irrigated land and 82 per cent. of the citrus crop.)

17. The revised proposal for the period of transition provided for the appointment by the General Assembly of a commission of five members, representing Guatemala, Iceland, Norway, Poland and Uruguay.<sup>(2)</sup> The dates for the termination of the mandate and the withdrawal of British armed forces should be agreed between this commission and the mandatory Power, and approved by the Security Council. In any event neither date was to be later than the 1st August, 1948. Throughout the period of transition, which would begin when the General Assembly adopted its recommendation, the administration of Palestine would be entrusted to the commission. Until the mandate was terminated, the mandatory Power would "maintain order and direct the main public services, to the extent that these have not yet been placed fully or partially under the direction of the commission, or the Provisional Councils of Government and the Joint Economic Board respectively." There was to be a progressive transfer of responsibility for all the func-

(2) The *Ad Hoc* Committee subsequently decided to leave the appointment of the Commission's members to the Assembly. The Assembly decided upon a new list, and the Commission would consist of representatives of Bolivia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Panama and the Philippines.

tions of government "from the mandatory Power to the provisional Councils of Government and the Joint Economic Board."

18. On the 20th November, Sir Alexander Cadogan informed the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the attitude of His Majesty's Government to these proposals. The following are extracts from his speech:—

"I feel bound, lest there be any misunderstanding, to make clear the extent to which the rôle assigned to my Government by Sub-Committee I is compatible, and beyond which it is not compatible, with the declared intentions of my Government. It will then be for the committee to decide to what extent these proposals are successful in meeting the problem of enforcement as it will exist in Palestine during the coming months . . .

"So long as my Government continues to hold the mandate for Palestine, they must insist upon their undivided control of that country.

"Having said that, I should at once make it no less clear that my Government have every right to relinquish the mandate at a very early date. In determining this date, they will certainly give proper consideration to such arrangements as may have been made by the United Nations for the establishment of a provisional régime to succeed the mandate. At the same time I am sure the committee will agree that there is no reasonable basis for the suggestion that my Government must await the approval of the Security Council before exercising their right to lay down a mandate which has proved to be unworkable and of which they desire to divest themselves as rapidly as possible. . . .

"The transfer of authority by the Palestine Government directly to Councils of Government or any other local representatives under a scheme of partition would in practice amount to the implementation of this scheme by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, which failing Arab-Jewish agreement they are not prepared to undertake. If a scheme of partition were approved and a United Nations Commission set up as proposed in the sub-committee's report, it would be to this commission that the Palestine Government would when the time came hand over its authority. . . .

"After authority has been handed over to the United Nations Commission there would still be zones in which British troops would remain pending final withdrawal. . . . They would not be able to permit activity in the zones of a nature calculated to provoke disorder and so to delay British withdrawal."

19. Sub-Committee I reconsidered its report in the light of this statement, and made a number of amendments. References to the Security Council were deleted from the paragraphs dealing with the termination of the mandate and the withdrawal of British forces. It was also made clear that the mandatory Power would transfer its authority to the United Nations Commission, and that it would not do so until it withdrew its armed forces.

20. When the *Ad Hoc* Committee received the revised report on the 22nd November two members of the Sub-Committee I expressed their irritation at the attitude of His Majesty's Government. The chairman of the sub-committee, M. Pruszyński (Poland), accused the United Kingdom of obstructing the Assembly. More surprising was the complaint of Mr. Herschel Johnson that the sub-committee had received only "very desultory assistance from the mandatory Power." Mr. J. M. Martin replied to these criticisms and again pointed out that the plan under discussion did not fill the gap created by the decision of His Majesty's Government that their troops could not be used as the instrument for its enforcement. "It was," he said, "the duty of the United Kingdom Government, in the light of its experience and knowledge of the situation in Palestine, to draw attention to the risk involved." At the next meeting Mr. Johnson spoke again. "The United Kingdom," he said, "had not given its full co-operation, and that had rendered the committee's task more difficult and had not closed any of the gaps, whether real or imaginary."

21. The report of Sub-Committee I, amended at some points was adopted by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the 25th November. It received 25 votes, with 13 against and 17 abstentions. On the following day the *Ad Hoc* Committee reported in turn to the Assembly.

22. It was at this stage that the environment in which the Assembly was sitting became visibly a major factor in its proceedings. It may be that the United

Nations will never again be faced with an issue which arouses so intense and local an interest among the population of New York. Throughout the session the delegates, following the Palestine debate in their daily newspapers, had been subjected to the influence of writers who were at once ignorant, prejudiced and unanimous.<sup>(3)</sup> The cumulative effect of their articles on many delegates must have been to convey the impression that an opponent of partition was an enemy of the American people. When the final meetings took place in the Assembly hall at Flushing, the galleries were packed with an almost exclusively Zionist audience. They applauded declarations of support for Zionism. They hissed Arab speakers. They created the atmosphere of a football match, with the Arabs as the away team.

23. The Zionists, however, did not rely on the vague influences of environment and popular excitement. Their own lobbyists were active both at Lake Success and in the capitals of member States. During the closing stages of the *Ad Hoc* Committee they came to the conclusion that the partition proposal would still be short of the necessary two-thirds majority in the Assembly. In these circumstances the United States Government was persuaded to use its influence with Governments which were for one reason or another dependent upon it, and which if left to themselves would either vote against partition or abstain. The first symptom which appeared at Lake Success of the American drive for a two-thirds majority was the remark in Mr. Johnson's speech of the 22nd November, that the United States Delegation "would not understand" abstentions on this important issue. There then began a movement of small Power delegations into the partitionist camp. The embarrassment of these repentant sinners was increased by the rapturous welcome each of them received from the New York press, where however praise of the United States Government for its efforts still alternated with complaints that it was not being sufficiently energetic. Particularly ludicrous was the position of the Philippine and Haytian delegates, who were obliged to vote in favour of

(3) The level of their understanding of the Palestine problem is illustrated by a leading article in the *New York Herald-Tribune* of 6th December, which contained the following sentence: "There is no fundamental national or political interest of the Arab peoples involved in this quarrel."



partition three days after they had spoken against it. Before voting M. Vieux of Hayti circulated the following statement:—

"I feel that my position in regard to the question of Palestine should be made clear. In the statement I made last Wednesday, I expressed the views that my Government had just forwarded to me in the most formal terms opposing the partition of Palestine. In an equally formal manner, contrary instructions were forwarded to me yesterday. Therefore, I will undertake the duty to act on the basis of the last instructions as I did carry out the previous one, due to the fact that I did not seek to influence the forthcoming of any instructions from my Government."

24. When the debate in plenary session opened on the morning of the 26th November, it was generally supposed that the vote would be taken either that night or on the following morning, the press having announced that the Assembly would sit on the 27th although it was Thanksgiving Day and as such a public holiday. Calculations made in the course of the day showed that 15 votes would be cast against partition, and that it was unlikely that the affirmative vote would rise as high as 30. Sir Mohammed Zafrullah Kahn (Pakistan), the acknowledged leader of the Moslem bloc in this Assembly, and Dr. Jamali (Iraq) offered to remove their names from the list of speakers in order that a vote might be taken at the night meeting. In the late afternoon, however, President Aranha announced that the Assembly would not meet after dinner, and would adjourn until the 28th.

25. By the 28th the two-thirds majority was assured. Consequently the tactics of the Arabs were no longer to accelerate but to delay the vote. They found unexpected support in this effort from the French Delegation, which appears to have taken the initiative (with or without instructions from Paris) in organising the manœuvres which postponed the victory of partition and temporarily disconcerted the United States Delegation. In the course of the morning, Dr. Janali made a speech at the end of which he trailed a barely perceptible olive branch. To those who were looking for it, it was sufficient, and after lunch M. Parodi carried a proposal for an adjournment of twenty-four hours, in order that a final attempt might be made

to open the way to a settlement by conciliation.

26. It was clear that no progress towards conciliation could be made in twenty-four hours. There was, however, another motion introduced on the 28th November, by the Colombian Delegation, to refer the whole problem back to the *Ad Hoc* Committee with instructions to work out a compromise solution and report in due course to a special session of the Assembly. An understanding appears to have been reached, after the adjournment on the 28th, that this motion would be revised on the following day if an Arab spokesman had first made a statement sufficiently conciliatory to offer some prospect that a compromise might yet be found.

27. The final meeting of the Assembly opened at 4 p.m. on the 29th November. Camille Bey Chamoun, speaking on behalf of all the Arab Delegations, outlined a number of principles "intended to serve as an intermediary formula between the two theses which have faced us throughout our debates." Of these principles, the most important were the following:—

"*Principle II.*—The Government of the Federal and Independent State of Palestine shall be constituted on a federal basis, and shall consist of a federal Government and of cantonal Governments of the Arabs and Jews....

"*Principle V.*—The constituent assembly, in defining the rights of the federal Government of Palestine, and the rights of its legislation and judicial organs, in the definition of the rights of the cantonal Governments, and also in the definition of the relationship between the cantonal Governments and the federal Government, shall be guided principally by the rules which govern the constitution of the United States of America and by the organic laws of the states of this union."

Neither the Colombian nor any other "neutral" delegation responded to this belated proposal for a compromise on federal lines. It was left to the Iranian Delegate to present a motion for reference back to the *Ad Hoc* Committee. The President ruled that this, not being a simple motion for adjournment, could not take precedence over the draft resolution presented by the *Ad Hoc* Committee. This was accordingly put to the vote, and

carried by 33 votes to 13 with 10 abstentions.

28. Immediately after the vote, Sir A. Cadogan made the following statement:—

"Now that the General Assembly has adopted this resolution, I must point out that there will be a number of points of detail connected with the application of the plan that will closely affect my Government. I have, therefore, been instructed to express the hope that the United Nations Commission will get into communication with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in order that arrangements may be agreed

for their arrival in Palestine and for the co-ordination of their places with those of the mandatory Power for the withdrawal of British administration and British military forces."

29. The delegates of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria and the Yemen then made statements to the effect that their Governments did not recognise the validity of the Assembly's decision and reserved their full freedom of action, after which the Arabs walked out of the Assembly.

Foreign Office,  
31st December, 1947.



## CHAPTER II.—TRANSJORDAN

E 417/417/80

No. 21

## ANNUAL REPORT ON TRANSJORDAN, 1946

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 13th January)*

(No. 2) Amman,  
Sir, 2nd January, 1947

I have the honour to enclose herewith my annual report on Transjordan for that part of 1946 following the ratification of the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty of Alliance on 17th June, 1946.

2. Although this is the first report of its kind to be submitted on Transjordan since the affairs of that country ceased to be the concern of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I have not thought it necessary to repeat the large amount of purely descriptive matter regarding the country and its form of Government which is available in the printed reports which were issued prior to war by the Colonial Office to the Council of the League of Nations on the administration of Transjordan.

I have, therefore, confined this report to political and administrative developments which have taken place since the ratification of the treaty.

The general machinery of Government can be assumed to be that described in the earlier printed reports under reference except in so far as modifications are mentioned in the enclosure to this despatch.

3. An economic report for 1946 will follow in due course.

I have, &c.

A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

Enclosure in No. 21

*Annual Report on Transjordan for 1946*

1. The history of the Hashimite kingdom of Transjordan as an independent sovereign State commenced on the 17th June, 1946, when ratifications of the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty of Alliance were exchanged at Amman. The first Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty to Transjordan presented his letters of credence a few days later, on the 22nd of the month.

Independent Transjordan emerged from the suzerainty of Great Britain without a preliminary period of political agitation, or worse, which is so frequently a feature

of a change of status of this kind, and, in consequence, there was no qualification in the appreciation which was voiced generally by the inhabitants of the country at the liberal policy which had been followed by the mandatory Power.

The criticism which arose in neighbouring Arab States in connexion with the military annex to the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty, which was said to detract from the genuineness of the independence achieved by this country, found little or no echo in Transjordan. King Abdullah continued to express gratitude for what Great Britain had done for himself and for his country, and he contended that other Arab countries would do well to enter into close treaty relations with a powerful friend rather than to assert pretentious claims which they were in no position to defend effectively. The ordinary citizen did not feel that the treaty accorded him inadequate rights, indeed, there was some evidence of many persons being startled by the sudden elevation which their country had secured.

2. As the ruler of an independent State, King Abdullah lost the feeling of inferiority and frustration which had troubled him in the past when he was the ruler of a mandated territory with limited autonomy. His change of status did not affect his personal conduct and life and, far from assuming airs, he was, if anything, more accessible and courteous than before.

His release from the ties of a mandate gave a fillip to his ambition to play a more effective rôle in Middle Eastern politics. In this connexion he has been interested in three possible developments:—

- (a) The inclusion in Transjordan of the Arab districts of Palestine following partition;
- (b) a closer union between Iraq and Transjordan, and
- (c) the establishment of a monarchy over Syria and Transjordan or Greater Syria.

As regards the first and last of these possibilities he has taken little or no initia-

tive, and has, for the main, waited on events. In the matter of a closer union with Iraq, however, he has pressed for action periodically.

In internal affairs he has played an increasingly effective part with some detriment to the power and influence of the Council of Ministers but, so far, his interference has not been harmful to the administration of the country, and he has forced through some useful measures which the Ministers lacked the courage to take on their own initiative.

3. Immediately after the ratification of the treaty, a tendency was evident on the part of the Ministers to stand on their dignity and to watch jealously for any action by His Majesty's Minister which was not covered by the terms of the treaty, but this phase soon passed and the informal consultation on current affairs, which used to take place between the Prime Minister and the British Resident, was resumed with His Majesty's Minister, who frequently found himself asked to use his personal influence over King Abdullah in questions of local and internal concern.

One of the effects of the removal of the strict financial control exercised hitherto by the mandatory Power, was that more money was spent on political questions. This affected the efficiency of the public services to some extent and the machinery of government undoubtedly lost some of its former driving power. On the whole, however, the Transjordan Government showed reasonable political and administrative stability during its first period of freedom from foreign control.

4. The desire of King Abdullah to enhance the prestige of Transjordan by exchanging diplomatic representatives with as many countries as possible had to be tempered by the obvious inability of the financial resources of the country to support a large number of missions abroad.

A Transjordan legation was opened in London with a distant relation of the King in charge as Minister. This legation exercises jurisdiction over an honorary commercial agent in Paris.

The Transjordan consulates at Bagdad, Beirut and Cairo were changed to legations and a Transjordan consul-general was appointed to Jerusalem.

Both the Lebanese and Iraqi Governments opened legations at Amman under *chargés d'affaires*.

Owing principally to the ill-feeling caused in Syria by the persistence of the Transjordan authorities in fostering the

scheme for reuniting Transjordan and Syria, no diplomatic representation existed between the two countries at the end of 1946, although Transjordan maintained a consulate at Damascus in the charge of a clerical officer who came under the authority of the Transjordan legation at Beirut.

Similarly, the pending issue of the Saudi Arabian claim to the district of Ma'an and Aqaba proved to be an obstacle to the exchange of diplomatic or consular representatives between Transjordan and Saudi Arabia.

The Transjordan Government secured the agreement of the Iraqi Government to the interests of Transjordan being safeguarded by Iraqi representatives stationed in countries where Transjordan had no direct representation.

A request was addressed to His Majesty's Government that British consular officers should protect Transjordan's interests in countries where no Transjordan or Iraqi representative was present.

5. The non-acceptance in August of the application of Transjordan for admission to the United Nations Organisation, through the exercise of the right of veto by the Russian representative on the Security Council, was accepted more philosophically than would have been the case had Eire and Portugal not found themselves in a similar position.

The public's attitude in this matter was also affected by a general feeling of scepticism on the practical value of international organisations such as the United Nations Organisation and the Arab League.

The Transjordan Government showed itself to be opposed to any proposal that the Arab League should be recognised by His Majesty's Government as a diplomatic entity. King Abdullah went further and expressed the view, on more than one occasion, that Transjordan was dragged by the League into commitments which did not accord with the interests of the country; he accepted his Ministers' advice, however, that the time was not opportune for withdrawal and that, in any case, the two Hashimite States should follow an identical policy regarding the League.

6. The revival of the Saudi Arabian claim to the district of Ma'an and Aqaba, which followed the termination of the British mandate over Transjordan, was viewed with some alarm owing to the initial belief that His Majesty's Government tended to support the Saudi Arabian authorities. The Transjordan Government



at first declined to discuss any suggestion impugning the finality of the frontier which the country had inherited from the mandatory Power, but subsequently agreed to an informal exchange of views on the subject between the Transjordan and Saudi representatives at the London Conference on Palestine. This exchange, which took place on the eve of the Transjordan delegate's return to Amman, consisted merely of a reassertion of the Saudi claim and its rejection by the Transjordan delegate coupled with an assurance that Transjordan would continue to afford the facilities for travel in transit between Saudi Arabia and Syria which were provided for in the Hadda Agreement concluded between His Majesty's Government and King Abdel Aziz ibn Saud. The two delegates then agreed that the question could be followed up when the Amir Faisal ibn Saud visited Transjordan, as he had promised to do, at some convenient date in the near future.

The visit took place from 30th December, 1946, to 1st January, 1947, but no discussion took place on the questions at issue between the two countries.

No action has been taken by the Transjordan authorities to restrict in any way the wide privileges which were accorded to Saudi Arabians during the mandatory period, both as regards travel in transit to and from Syria and travel to and from Transjordan.

7. Terrorism in Palestine affected Transjordan more closely than the other Arab States, and the three bridges connecting the two countries were blown up the day of the ratification of the treaty. It was to the credit of the authorities of this country that the irritation and impatience caused by the outrages in Palestine were not translated into some practical form of resentment.

Although the Transjordan Government subscribed to the decision of the Arab League to boycott Jewish goods, the boycott was enforced more in theory than in practice, and articles of Jewish manufacture, for which a real need existed here, were imported without restriction other than the general necessity of obtaining an import permit. The absence of any protests in the Jewish press against a boycott by Transjordan was in itself proof of the small degree to which the decision was effective in regard to this country.

During the discussions about Palestine at the London Conference the Transjordan delegate, Samir Pasha Rifai, fell into line

with his colleagues and rejected any scheme involving partition but, notwithstanding this, there is little doubt that King Abdullah and the Transjordan Government would acquiesce, ostensibly under protest, to an equitable scheme for the partition of Palestine which provided for the inclusion of the Arab districts of Palestine in the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan.

In August 1946 the Legislative Council promulgated a law providing for the issue of special stamps, the use of which would be obligatory, and for the devotion of the proceeds of their sale to safeguarding, in some unspecified manner, the Arabs of Palestine from Jewish expansion. The stamps have not yet been placed on sale. This issue purports to be in execution of the decision taken by the Arab rulers at the "Inchass" Conference, which was convoked by the King of Egypt.

King Abdullah attempted on various occasions to establish personal influence over the more moderate members of the Arab Higher Committee of Palestine, but with no success.

8. Owing to the open advocacy by King Abdullah and his Ministers in favour of the reunion of Syria and Transjordan, relations between the two territories were not happy during the period under review. The Syrian authorities appeared to be unduly nervous and made a number of unfounded allegations against the Transjordan Government and British officials in its employ.

There is no doubt, however, that the Syrian monarchists, for whose activities those in Transjordan were blamed, made free use of the names of King Abdullah and Brigadier J. B. Glubb, the Officer Commanding the Arab Legion, in their efforts to strengthen their following.

In September 1946, matters showed signs of reaching a crisis. Envoys came to Transjordan with questions as to the attitude which would be adopted by the British forces in Palestine and Transjordan in the event of a rebellion in Syria.

Syrian army officers attempted to establish contact with Brigadier Glubb, who happened to be on leave in the United Kingdom; and, when the Syrian Government took action against Suleiman Murshid, the leader of the Alawites, calls were made for the opening of a second monarchist front, in southern Syria, in order to take pressure off the Alawites.

All these events had a disturbing effect on the King, and he showed some signs of

taking a more active part in assisting his Syrian supporters, but a *détente* followed the visit to Transjordan of Hassan Bey el Hakim, one of the leaders of the Syrian monarchists, who decried any idea of resorting to violence to secure a change of régime in Syria, and asked that assistance from Transjordan should be limited to providing funds for the coming electoral campaign in Syria. It appeared, subsequently, that several thousands of pounds had been paid over to individual Syrian monarchists from King Abdullah's private resources.

The question was revived again in a more noisy but less sinister fashion by a statement made in the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies on 13th November, 1946, to the effect that the Lebanese Government was opposed to the Greater Syria scheme. This drew an unrepentant reply from the Transjordan Minister for Foreign Affairs, made to the Legislative Council at Amman, to the effect that the matter was no direct concern of the Lebanon, that Transjordan was entitled to wish for the reunion of Syria and that the Transjordan Government proposed to persist in that policy.

There next followed a debate on the subject in the Syrian Parliament of which the tone was hostile to the scheme in question. The Prime Minister of Transjordan was questioned in connexion with the Syrian debate by members of the Transjordan Legislative Council. He reasserted the determination of the Transjordan Government to persist in its policy of securing union with Syria, and added a number of ill advised reflections on the honesty of purpose of the Syrian Administration in opposing the scheme.

The matter was then ventilated at a meeting of the Council of the Arab League where, after some plain speaking, it was decided not to proceed with the examination of a complaint by the Syrian delegate, and to recommend that no further pronouncements on the subject be made before the legislatures of the Arab States.

9. King Abdullah was more active in his endeavours to make some progress in the plan for a closer union between Transjordan and Iraq which was outlined at a meeting in Transjordan between King Abdullah and the Regent of Iraq immediately prior to the departure of the former for Great Britain in connexion with the negotiations for the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty. Whilst the proposals appear to have been viewed favourably by the Iraqi authorities when they were first mooted, of

late the Iraqi Ministers have shown reluctance to do anything further in the matter. This reluctance is probably shared, although not admitted, by the Transjordan Ministers.

10. Largely due to the uncompromising attitude of King Abdullah on the subject of communism, Russian propaganda has made no appreciable progress in Transjordan.

Apart from the general realisation that any outward signs of communistic leanings would be visited by the wrath of the King, the social condition of the people of Transjordan affords little encouragement to the dissemination of such doctrines. Transjordan is a nation of smallholders and nomads; there are no large personal estates and few rich men; class distinctions are unknown as yet and the average citizen regards himself, with some justification, as being as good as the next man. This state of affairs is encouraged by the attitude of King Abdullah who is not only accessible personally to the least of his subjects, but sees that his Ministers and officials are equally so.

There is, of course, also the religious aspect. The small towns, villages and nomadic camps of Transjordan are distinguished by a simple piety, devoid of the fanaticism or atheism which has developed from contact with western peoples and manners in the large cities of the Middle East. This remark applies equally to the Moslem majority and the Christian minorities.

On political questions related to Russia, King Abdullah has always preached that Turkey is the final bulwark of the Arab people against Russian imperialism and its religious and social codes which are irreconcilable with Islam and the Arab ways of life. His open partisanship on this issue has drawn a considerable volume of personal abuse in broadcasts in Arabic from Russia.

The Secretary-General of the Turkish Foreign Office paid an official visit to Transjordan in December 1946 in order to convey to King Abdullah the congratulations of the President of the Turkish Government on the independence of Transjordan and to invite the King to visit Angora in the near future. He proposed the conclusion of a treaty of amity between the two countries and left a draft for consideration.

11. Although no particular fault was to be found with the existing Organic Law of



Transjordan, it was felt generally that the change in the country's status should be marked by some measure of constitutional reform. The Organic Law was, therefore, redrafted, and passed under the title of "The Transjordan Constitution" by the Legislative Council at its fifth and last ordinary session.

The only change of importance introduced by the new law was provision for a second chamber, or council of Senators, in the legislature. The Senators will not exceed in number half the strength of the Council of Deputies elected by the people; they will be appointed by the King.

A minority of the Councillors opposed the Bill demanding:—

- (a) That the Council of Ministers should be responsible to the legislature and not to the sovereign.
- (b) That the items of the budget should be debated by the legislature and not the totals of the heads only.
- (c) That the provision vesting the natural and mineral wealth of the country in the person of the sovereign in trust for the Government should be amended.

The last two contentions were overcome without difficulty, but the matter of the responsibility of the executive was fought with some tenacity. Eventually the recalcitrant Councillors were seen by the King and informed that he had no intention of placing the executive at the mercy of the legislature and thus making the efficient administration of the country difficult if not impossible. The opposition then gave way.

Most responsible persons consider that stage of political development reached by the people justifies the adoption of this attitude by King Abdullah.

In comparison with neighbouring territories, public security in Transjordan was exemplary. In spite of the political issues which impeded diplomatic relations between Transjordan and between Saudi Arabia and Syria, there were no frontier incidents and the personal relationship between the officials charged with the administration of the frontier areas were cordial. The co-operation between the security authorities in Transjordan and Palestine continued to be as close and as satisfactory as it was during the mandatory period.

12. In September 1946 the following redistribution of portfolios was effected

for administrative reasons between the existing members of the Council of Ministers:—

#### Old Council of Ministers:

Ibrahim Pasha Hashim: Prime Minister and Defence.

Sheikh Fahmy Hashim: Qadhi Qudhat and Education.

Mohamad Pasha Shureiki: Foreign Affairs and Finance.

Mussalam Pasha Attar: Interior and Justice.

Nicola Bey Ghanma: Economics.

Omar Bey Ma'ani: Communications.

#### New Council of Ministers:

Ibrahim Pasha Hashim: Unchanged.

Sheikh Fahmy Hashim: Qadhi Qudhat and Justice.

Mohamad Pasha Shureiki: Foreign Affairs and Education.

Mussalam Pasha Attar: Interior and Economics.

Nicola Bey Ghanma: Finance.

Omar Bey Ma'ani: Unchanged.

In December 1946 Mussalam Pasha Attar resigned for personal reasons and was replaced by Abdel Mahdi Bey Shemaileh as Minister of Interior and Economics.

During 1946 the internal administration of the country proceeded satisfactorily and there were no abnormal outbreaks of human or animal disease or of agricultural pests.

13. The strength of the military units of the Arab Legion remained at one mechanised brigade of three regiments and sixteen infantry guard companies with the necessary ancillary services.

Of these one whole regiment plus two squadrons from the other regiments and all sixteen infantry guard companies were employed in Palestine under the operational command of the General Officer Commanding the British Forces.

During the latter part of the period under review, the 1st Infantry Division stationed in Palestine had successive brigade training in Transjordan territory to the north-east of Amman. The depot of the Transjordan Frontier Force remained at Zerqa and the Royal Air Force station at Amman housed a training school for that force.

14. The press of Transjordan consists of three newspapers, *El Urdon*, *El Jezireh* and *El Wafa*, with limited circulations

and irregular appearances. They have little or no effect on public opinion in political matters.

*El Urdon* is nominally independent but, in fact, is at pains to avoid offending anyone. *El Jezireh* is entirely under the palace influence, and many of its leaders are in a phraseology familiar to those acquainted with the King's composition. *El Wafa* is controlled by the Young Men's Party and is inclined to hostility towards the present administration but not towards the King; its criticisms, are, however, tempered with considerable caution.

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No. 22

## VISIT OF KING ABDULLAH OF TRANSJORDAN TO TURKEY:

### SIGNING OF "TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP"

Sir D. Kelly to Mr. Bevin. (Received 22nd January)

(No. 23)

Sir, *Angora, 16th January, 1947*

As I reported in my telegrams Nos. 24 and 30 of 11th and 16th January, King Abdullah of Transjordan arrived in Angora on the morning of 8th January and left on 11th January for Istanbul, where he was the guest of the Turkish Government at the Dolmabahçe Palace, and left on the President's yacht for Transjordan on 17th January.

2. The conversations about the text of the draft treaty were concluded during the first days and the treaty was signed on the morning of 11th January—the signatories being M. Erkin, Secretary-General of the Turkish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and M. Muhammed Shureyki, the Transjordan Minister for Foreign Affairs.

3. When M. Erkin visited Amman in December he had left a draft treaty of friendship providing for perpetual peace and friendship, exchange of diplomatic representatives, exchange of judicial proceedings, and the reciprocal grant to each other's subjects of most-favoured-nation treatment in the matter of travel and residence. There was finally an article 5 according to which the contracting parties would resolve disputes between themselves by pacific means in accordance with article 33 of the charter and would submit all conflicts to the Security Council under article 37; and secondly, would use every effort to help solve disputes between one of them and a third neighbouring State. This second part did not appeal either to

During the year, these papers welcomed the Anglo-Transjordan Treaty, clamoured for Greater Syria, and joined the chorus of the Arab League in support of the Arabs of Palestine, and to a lesser degree in support of Egypt. *El Jezireh* carried a number of articles in opposition to communism and to Russian activities generally.

15. The Transjordan section of the Hejaz Railway continued to be operated by the Palestine Railways, and the Transjordan Government showed no anxiety to press its claim to the ownership and custody of the line.

the Prime Minister of Transjordan or to His Majesty's Government, and I was instructed to point out to the Secretary-General that it might well be interpreted as directed against Syria. The Secretary-General disputed this, saying it was identical with a clause in the Turco-Iraq Treaty but he eventually told me that before the arrival of King Abdullah in Angora the Turkish Cabinet decided themselves to withdraw this second part of the proposed article. The clause about the grant of most-favoured-nation treatment to each other's subjects was replaced by one providing for a Consular Convention to be drafted—that is, has been in reality shelved for further negotiation because the Transjordan Minister for Foreign Affairs had been seized with a desire to obtain not most-favoured-nation but complete national treatment. The Turkish Government refused this, first on the ground that certain professions and forms of commerce and industry were reserved to Turkish nationals, and secondly, because of the dangerous precedent. The Secretary-General quoted especially the possibility of the Soviet Government, on the basis of most-favoured-nation treatment, backing a Soviet national's application for a petroleum concession if a subject of Transjordan had become eligible for such a concession. The Transjordan Government also put forward a new clause which would have had the effect of nullifying the treaty, or any part of it, which should eventually prove to be incompatible with obligations



deriving from membership of the Arab League. This of course would have given Transjordan a unilateral right of denunciation, and one which could be exercised in hypothetical conditions quite incapable of present definition; it reminded me of the instructions given to the 21st Divisional Transport before the Battle of Loos in 1915 to "march with their left on the moon." The Turkish Government offered an alternative formula which made denunciation easy for either party, and the Transjordan Government then dropped the whole proposal. The Secretary-General, while being most communicative about the stages of the negotiations and ready to explain in detail and textually all points of substance, has not yet actually offered me a copy of the text; it makes a better impression and is more encouraging for future confidences, not to press for this so long as it is not really necessary for us to have it.

4. His Majesty's visit to Angora was marked by the usual ceremonies and festivities and his programme was a heavy one. On his arrival, he was greeted at the station by the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister and other notables of the Turkish State and municipality of Angora. On the evening preceding the official reception given in his honour by the Prime Minister on 9th January, he attended a banquet given by the President of the Republic and Mme. İnönü, at which members of the Cabinet, the Chief of the General Staff, the vice-president of the Republican Party, the president of the Democratic Party and other important Turkish officials were present. President İnönü made a speech welcoming His Majesty in cordial but general terms, to which King Abdullah made a suitable reply in the same vein. No foreigners were invited to this or to any other function except the Prime Minister's party on 9th January. I was informed in advance by the Minister for Foreign Affairs that this course would be adopted so as to avoid shocking the King by the display of alcohol more than was absolutely necessary. I have nevertheless since heard that this self-denial was not practised by the Turkish officers at a luncheon given by the Chief of the General Staff at the War Academy, which the King afterwards inspected. His programme included other visits to the Agricultural Institute, where he was received by the Minister of Agriculture, and to a girls' college. His Majesty's

impressions of the latter visit and of female education in general may be induced from the subsequent lament of the directress that he walked hurriedly through with downcast eyes refusing to look at the specimens of work arranged for his inspection; and from the fact that, shortly before a reception given by himself at his hotel, the King sent a message to the Iraqi Minister's wife, who is his half-sister, saying he assumed that she was a good Moslem and would not appear unveiled in the presence of men. His assumption proved correct and Mme. Ata Amin did not appear, although she usually attends official and private parties in European dress. On 10th January, which was a Friday, His Majesty, accompanied by his suite, attended prayers at the Hacı Bayram mosque.

5. On the same day the King gave a press conference which was attended by representatives of the *New York Times*, the Arab News Agency, the Associated Press, France Presse, Britanovna and the Chinese News Bureau. A statement of the questions and answers is enclosed,<sup>(1)</sup> from which it will be seen that His Majesty declined to make any statement as to the political or military significance of the Turco-Transjordan agreement (it had in fact not been signed at the actual moment when he gave the conference) and was also very reserved about the Hatay question, but was remarkably expansive in answer to a question about Persia and the "Turco-Arab Alliance." To this King Abdullah made a striking answer that not only Persia might be expected to adhere, but also Afghanistan, North Africa and Pakistan, and that all these countries formed one family and must help each other to recover their territorial integrity so as to restore to the Orient its old glory and greatness. This answer seems to presuppose a religious rather than a merely linguistic basis for the grouping which the King seemed to have in mind, and it also implied some definite Indian Pakistan Government and suggested some new Moslem State in North Africa. I asked the Secretary-General on 15th January for all the information he could give me about this interview. He explained that the King's statements were entirely personal and had been in no way discussed or communicated with the Turkish Government either before or after delivery, and that he only assumed them to be authentic because there had been no denial. He made

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

his secretary telephone to Istanbul to "check up" with a Turkish official who had been present; I received a message in the evening from the private secretary to the effect that he had not been able to get hold of this official. The Secretary-General did, however, explain that the reference to a "Turco-Arab Alliance" was the result of a mistranslation of the Arabic word and that it meant only "Treaty of Friendship"; also that there had been no general conversation with King Abdullah or his Ministers which would throw light on His Majesty's references to Persia, North Africa, Pakistan, &c.

6. The absence of both Syrian and Soviet Chargés d'Affaires from the Prime Minister's reception in Angora on 9th January was noted; and the Anatolian Agency has published a long statement from the *Tass* correspondent at Beirut,

reporting hostile comment from a number of Syrian and Lebanese papers on the King's visit. The King's cautious disclaimer of interest in the Hatay question seems to have been interpreted as being in return for some Turkish promise of support for the Greater Syria project; there is of course no evidence whatever of this. There has been no discordant note in the Turkish welcome and the only result of the Syrian press criticism has been an account published in the official *Ulus* of atrocities attributed to the Syrian authorities in Lattakia against the Turkish residents there.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to His Majesty's representatives at Amman, Damascus, Beirut, Bagdad, Cairo, Jedda and Jerusalem and to the British Middle East Office, Cairo.

I have, &c.

DAVID V. KELLY.

E 1971/1971/80

No. 23

## ANNUAL REPORT, ECONOMIC (A), ON TRANSJORDAN, 1946

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 6th March)*

(No. 15)

Sir, *Amman, 26th February, 1947*

I have the honour to submit the following economic report (A) on Transjordan in respect of the year 1946. As this is the first report of its kind to be presented, I have included a considerable amount of descriptive material which will not be repeated in subsequent reports.

It is necessary to prefix any report on Transjordan with the statement that no Department of Statistics exists in this country, and that, in consequence, many of the figures given are estimates only. The figures provided by the Department of Customs and Trade on the subject of exports and imports are, however, reasonably accurate.

### General

2. The economy of Transjordan depends for the main part on the agricultural and pastoral activities of its inhabitants. Local manufacturing industries are few and still in the embryonic stage, and Transjordan must, therefore, pay for its manufactured imports by exports of grain, fruit, vegetables and livestock.

During the recent war the sources of income of Transjordan were supplemented,

firstly, by the profits of a contraband trade which the geographical position of the country and its long open land frontiers lying through sparsely populated areas made both inevitable and difficult to control, and, secondly, by the enlistment of thousands of Transjordanians in the Arab Legion and the Transjordan Frontier Force units, which were paid for with funds provided by His Majesty's Government.

The time has now come, however, when these two assets will gradually dwindle and the country will, once again, have to pay its way with its own produce.

In this connexion, difficulties will arise from the rapid increase in the population which swells in turn the local consumption of foodstuffs without, so far, being accompanied by a commensurate increase in production. In other words, the increase in population is decreasing the surplus of local products available for export. If this process is allowed to continue, the results on the economy of the country will be serious; the remedies are better methods of cultivation, the establishment of certain local industries for which raw material is available in the Middle East and, finally, the development of an entrepôt trade for which Transjordan is favourably situated in the geographical sense.



3. For various reasons, mainly political, there has never been a census taken of the population of Transjordan, but the number of persons registered for rations in April 1945 was 476,052. In 1939 the Department of Public Health had estimated the population to be 300,000; this figure was probably too low, but the fact remains that there has been a rapid increase in the size of the population during the last seven years. This increase has been due in part to the improvement in the health of the nation and, to a lesser degree, to the settlement in Transjordan of Arabs from Syria, Palestine and Saudi Arabia.

Of these settlers, most of the Syrians and Palestinians probably came to Transjordan in search of more peaceful conditions of life, while the move from Saudi Arabia was due to unfavourable economic conditions in that country.

#### Finance

4. *The Budget*.—The following figures give the revenue and expenditure of the Transjordan by heads of the budget. Column A gives the actuals for the financial year 1945-46, and columns B, C, show the draft estimates for 1946-47 as framed under the mandatory régime and as revised after the ratification of the Transjordan Treaty of 1946:—

REVENUE			
	A £P.	B £P.	C £P.
Customs and excise ... ..	610,604	368,270	758,446
Licences and taxes ... ..	491,129	377,230	398,220
Fees of court or office ... ..	141,057	98,900	119,430
Posts and telegraphs ... ..	62,734	76,800	105,100
Government property ... ..	21,493	19,000	11,000
Interest ... ..	468	400	400
Miscellaneous ... ..	171,268	179,880	179,880
Advances ... ..	105	240	646
Sale of State domain ... ..	5,100	5,050	5,323
Grant-in-aid from His Majesty's Government ... ..	1,750,000	1,767,822	...
Colonial Development and Welfare Act ... ..	3,571	5,000	...
Grant-in-aid to meet O.P.D.A. ... ..	31,008	...	...
	3,288,537	2,898,592	1,578,445
EXPENDITURE			
	A £P.	B £P.	C £P.
Civil List ... ..	24,313	24,408	39,248
Legislature ... ..	3,597	3,891	5,281
Pensions and gratuities ... ..	26,305	27,200	27,200
Council of Ministers ... ..	10,223	10,497	11,492
Consulates (Foreign Affairs) ... ..	6,003	6,468	21,000
Censorship Department ... ..	465	...	...
Interior ... ..	15,486	15,849	15,597
Passport Department ... ..	2,730	2,938	2,962
Justice ... ..	23,334	25,419	26,658
Sharia courts ... ..	5,058	5,271	5,301
Finances ... ..	18,169	21,792	20,574
Customs ... ..	41,489	25,466	26,405
Public Health ... ..	29,719	29,523	30,927
Casualty stations ... ..	11,526	24,656	...
Education ... ..	31,986	37,719	37,719
Agriculture ... ..	16,501	9,986	22,439
Antiquities ... ..	2,951	3,118	3,318
Public works ... ..	7,030	7,563	7,563
Public works, recurrent ... ..	50,789	44,350	55,550
Posts and telegraphs ... ..	31,143	35,838	41,660
Lands and surveys ... ..	47,842	54,061	55,001
Arab Legion ... ..	1,866,477	1,951,161 <sup>(a)</sup>	296,415
		(b)	3,336
		(c)	250,000
Prisons ... ..	27,209	35,078	...
Miscellaneous ... ..	477,738	349,264	464,082
Audit ... ..	5,392	6,003	6,003
Tribal courts ... ..	1,345	1,407	1,407
Advances ... ..	800	800	800

<sup>(1)</sup> Under the terms of the Transjordan treaty of 1946, this item of revenue became a subsidy from His Majesty's Government towards the cost of the military units of the Arab Legion and ceased to be a general grant-in-aid to the finances of Transjordan.

#### EXTRAORDINARY

	A £P.	B £P.	C £P.
Public works ... ..	20,705	17,566	46,754
Arab Legion ... ..	385,856	128,000	23,607
Lands and surveys ... ..	3,571	5,000	5,000
Share in O.P.D.A. ... ..	31,008	...	...
Customs ... ..	60	300	320
Posts and telegraphs ... ..	615	...	18,834
Irrigation schemes ... ..	61	...	432
Finance ... ..	...	...	5,000
	3,227,296	2,910,592	1,578,445

In the revised budget for 1946-47, which appeared in the Transjordan Official Gazette, the subsidies from His Majesty's Government towards the cost of the military units of the Arab Legion and the expenditure on those units were omitted. This was, doubtless, done for political reasons as the Transjordan Government does not wish to draw attention to the fact that it has to depend on a foreign subsidy for the maintenance of its armed forces.

As a result of this, no provision appeared for the casualty clearing stations, which are part of the military units. As regards the provision made for the Arab Legion and prisons, (a) represents the actual cost of the whole Arab Legion (including military units) for the period from 1st April to 16th June, 1946; (b) is the actual cost of the prison service for the same period; and (c) is the estimated cost of the police and prison services (excluding the military units) for the period from 17th June, 1946, to 31st March, 1947.

Both the revenue and the expenditure in the revised budget for 1946-47 are based on an inflated and abnormal income which is likely to decline sharply during 1947-48 when the Transjordan Government will be faced with the necessity of making drastic reductions in expenditure.

#### Government Financial Operations

5. No financial operations were undertaken by the Transjordan Government during 1946.

#### Public Debt

6. Transjordan has no public debt in the accepted sense of the word. The only external debt of the Transjordan Government is the repayment of a loan of £P.50,000 issued by His Majesty's Government to enable the Transjordan Government to purchase the military installations of Aqaba Port. The loan is free of interest and repayable from the revenue obtained from the port.

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#### Central Bank and Currency

7. No Central Bank exists in Transjordan, and the Palestine currency is the official currency. No reliable figures can be provided of the amount of Palestine currency which is in circulation in Transjordan, but it has been assumed to be 6.5 per cent. of the total issue. This percentage has been accepted, by agreement between the Palestine and Transjordan Governments, as the basis for calculating Transjordan's share of the profits of the working of the Palestine Currency Board.

#### Exchange

8. During the year 1946 exchange in Transjordan was free, but all remittances to countries outside the sterling bloc, whether such were made in sterling or in foreign currencies, were subject to the permission of the Controller of Currency appointed by the Transjordan Government.

The following table shows the expenditure outside the sterling bloc during the year under review:—

United States dollars ... ..	1,237,484
Swiss francs ... ..	370,900

Speculative purchases of currencies other than those within the sterling bloc were not authorised and did not in fact take place, although gold changed hands freely at rates varying from £6 6s. 0d. per sovereign in January, 1946, £4 18s. 0d. in July, 1946, and £5 3s. 0d. in December, 1946.

#### Money Market

9. Three commercial banks operate in Transjordan: the Ottoman Bank at Amman with its head offices in London, and the Arab Bank and Arab National Bank with branches at Amman and Irbid and their head offices in Jerusalem.

The following information was provided by these banks with regard to their operations during 1946.

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## (a) Ottoman Bank

	£P.
Advances ...	1,073,815
Discounts ...	38,736
Deposits ...	1,966,037
Liabilities ...	2,086,106

The interest on advances was from 4 per cent. to 8 per cent. and the discount rate was 7 per cent. to 8 per cent. on bills and 6 per cent. on documentary credits.

## (b) Arab Bank

	£P.
Advances ...	1,326,058
Discounts ...	1,373,835
Deposits ...	8,561,190
Liabilities ...	850,571

Of the first three items the following amounts were outstanding at the end of the year: Advances, £P.288,454; Discounts, £P.71,327; Deposits, £P.541,848. The interest and discount rates varied between 9 per cent. and 6 per cent. per annum.

## (c) Arab National Bank

No figures were provided by this institution.

The Agricultural Bank is an autonomous institution of the Transjordan Government with a capital of £P.100,000 and the role of assisting local cultivators.

10. The following table shows the value of declared specie exported and imported during 1946:—

	Exports £P	Imports £P
Gold coins ...	...	42,289
Silver coins ...	27,500	4,938
Other metal coins...	1,315	...
Currency notes ...	3,401,300	444,020

## Foreign Trade

11. Trade arrangements between Transjordan and Palestine provide for the exemption from customs duty of the local produce and locally manufactured goods of both countries. Imports to Transjordan which pass through Palestine in transit pay duty on entry into Transjordan at the rates prescribed in the Transjordan Customs Tariff. Goods on which duty has been paid in Palestine and which are re-exported to Transjordan are admitted without further charge but Palestine refunds to Transjordan the duty collected on such goods at the rates prescribed in the Palestine Customs Tariff, such refunds being based on data collected at the Palestine-Transjordan frontier.

The Customs Agreement between Syria and Transjordan also provides for the exemption from customs duty of the local produce and the locally manufactured goods of both countries. Syria also grants transit facilities for foreign goods destined for Transjordan. The duty collected at the time of their entry from the exporting country on goods of foreign origin which are re-exported is refunded to the receiving country and the receiving country collected on its own account the difference between the amount of that refund and the customs duty which is payable under its own tariff, if the latter is higher.

12. The Transjordan Import Tariff schedule is based on the League of Nations Standardised Nomenclature and consists of 554 items of which 308 bear *ad valorem* rates of duty, 171 specific rates, 53 are exempt from duty and 22 carry conditional exemption.

The general rates of the duties are lower than those in force in neighbouring territories. As Transjordan has no local industries to protect, the customs policy of the Government is to keep the cost of imported manufactured goods as low as is possible.

13. The total value of the imports of Transjordan during 1946 was £P.8,116,235. The following is the distribution by countries of origin:—

	£P
United Kingdom ...	1,012,710
Iraq ...	841,492
India ...	219,528
United States ...	801,531
Argentina ...	371,477
Egypt ...	253,735
Turkey ...	74,572
Mexico ...	271,480
Iran ...	14,187
Brazil ...	231,298
Canada ...	14,194
Australia ...	36,216
Switzerland ...	208,274
Sweden ...	52,975
Belgium ...	42,359
Portugal ...	31,478
Uruguay ...	34,372
Yugoslavia ...	16,612
Italy ...	150,422
France ...	6,550
Japan ...	444
Palestine ...	752,542
Syria ...	691,126
Saudi Arabia ...	149,602
"Unspecified" ...	328,447
Imports by Concessionaires <sup>(1)</sup> ...	1,508,812

<sup>(1)</sup> Iraq Petroleum Company.

The main channels of importation were as follows:—

	£P
(a) Transit through Palestine ...	3,258,487
Transit through Syria ...	215,204
Transit through Iraq ...	10,344
Transit by Post ...	822,696
(b) Direct from Iraq ...	665,706
Direct from Saudi Arabia ...	149,602
Direct from Egypt ...	41,916
(c) Direct from Palestine—	
(i) Re-exports ...	222,065
(ii) Local produce ...	530,477
(d) Direct from Syria—	
(i) Re-exports ...	16,380
(ii) Local produce ...	674,746
(e) Imports by Iraq Petroleum Company ...	1,508,812

The imports by the Iraq Petroleum Company during 1946 were abnormally high and consisted principally of equipment and material needed for the duplication of the company's pipe-line between Kirkuk and Haifa.

The principal imports to Transjordan during 1946 were as follows:—

Livestock ...	(head)	183,702
Sugar ...	(tons)	2,790
Rice ...	( " )	1,481
Coffee ...	( " )	1,909
Dates ...	( " )	3,024
Confectionery ...	( " )	261
Tea ...	( " )	108
Soap ...	( " )	445
Cement ...	( " )	11,497
Tyres and tubes ...	( " )	259
Cigarette paper ...	( " )	224
Woollen articles ...	( " )	239
Clothing ...	( " )	181
White sheeting ...	( " )	218
Calico ...	( " )	217
Cotton piece-goods ...	( " )	979
Silk articles ...	( " )	104
Woollen goods ...	( " )	180
Head-gear ...	( " )	62
Footwear ...	( " )	135
Ironware ...	( " )	213
Iron bars ...	( " )	1,288
Timber ...	( " )	1,739
Paper ...	( " )	233
Benzine ...	(gallons)	2,262,206
Kerosene ...	( " )	2,068,779
Motor vehicles ...	( " )	1,400

14. The total value of exports from Transjordan during 1946 was £P.2,044,141 distributed amongst the following countries:—

	£P
Palestine ...	1,517,056
Syria ...	502,191
Iraq ...	4,570
Saudi Arabia ...	9,463
Egypt ...	10,891

The following were the principal exports of local produce:—

Wheat ...	(tons)	27,149
Barley ...	( " )	7,579
Millet ...	( " )	657
Lentils ...	( " )	2,306
Pulses ...	( " )	3,056

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Grapes ...	(tons)	2,938
Raisins ...	( " )	401
Fresh fruit ...	( " )	2,831
Fresh vegetables ...	( " )	2,933
Hides ...	( " )	179
Wool ...	( " )	53
Phosphate ...	( " )	4,023
Other minerals ...	( " )	1,102
Cattle ...	(head)	1,804

15. Appendix A to this report gives details of goods imported by Transjordan from Great Britain during the year under review.<sup>(1)</sup>

## Agriculture

16. The land of Transjordan falls into two natural zones:—

- the cultivated zone in which the rainfall in a normal year is sufficient for the raising of cereal crops, about 200 millimetres of rain a year appears to be the approximate minimum required for this purpose, and
- the dry zone in which rain irrigated crops cannot be grown but on which a certain number of livestock find seasonal grazing.

The area of the cultivated zone is about 1,932,000 acres, divided into the following categories:—

	Acres
(a) Irrigated land ...	65,000
(b) Vineyards ...	20,000
(c) Rain-fed cereals ...	1,037,000
(d) Forests and uncultivable land ...	700,000
(e) Undeveloped land ...	110,000
	1,932,000

17. Methods of cultivation in Transjordan are still old-fashioned but improvements are being imported by the younger generation of farmers in the face of considerable opposition from their conservatively minded elders. The use of agricultural machinery is becoming much more common and will be more so as supplies of equipment become easier to obtain.

The irrigated land is used mostly for intensive vegetable and banana cultivation, while rain-fed cereals are grown on a two or three year rotation, that is to say, either cereals followed by legumes or cereals then legumes and then a fallow year.

The use of artificial manure on rain-fed land is not usual and experiments in that direction have not given happy results; the service of fertilisation is, therefore, left to the herds that graze on the stubble throughout the summer months when natural grazing is no longer available.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



The average annual crops of grain are as follows:—

	Metric tons
Wheat	100,000
Barley	42,000
Millet	6,500
Lentils	10,000

In addition quantities of chickpeas, broadbeans, vetches and fenugreek are also produced, mainly for local consumption.

The following were the prices of grain in Amman at the end of December 1946:—

	Per metric ton £P
Wheat	40-42
Barley	22-25
Vetch	32-35
Chickpeas	40-45
Lentils	34-35
Beans	40
Millet	30-32
Maize	35-40

18. Grape growers have suffered from the results of an outbreak of phylloxera and it is probable that the area planted with vines has decreased somewhat during the past five years. Remedial measures have not shown much effect.

The planting of olive trees has, on the other hand, been popular in the northern parts of Transjordan and, if the land-owners continue to increase their olive orchards at the present rate, Transjordan will become self-supporting in the matter of supplies of olive oil in the near future.

Banana plantations in the irrigated lands of the Jordan Valley have proved successful investments, while a ready market at good prices is found for the fresh vegetables produced from that area also. Supplies of vegetable seed are obtained from the Lebanon and Palestine.

An average of about 100 tons of leaf tobacco is grown locally and is used, mixed with imported leaf tobacco, in the local tobacco factories.

19. Dairy farming is unknown in Transjordan and the local cattle is of the "scrub" variety. Beef is not a popular article of diet and milk supplies are obtained from the herds of goats and sheep. Cattle are kept principally for the purpose of producing gelded plough oxen; surplus stock is exported to Palestine for butchering. As cattle are not taxed no reliable record exists of the number of head present in Transjordan.

The normal population of goats and sheep is about 360,000 and 250,000 respectively. The market for surplus stock is again Palestine while animal products go to both Palestine and Syria.

The herds of camels kept by the nomadic tribes of Transjordan number about 8,000 animals.

The principal epizootic diseases prevalent in Transjordan are: mange, sheep-pox, foot-and-mouth disease, tick fever, fowl plague, and contiguous pleuro-pneumonia.

20. For a country so dependent on agriculture and livestock, the Department of Agriculture is unduly small: its technical personnel consists of a director and two assistants at headquarters, eight district agricultural officers, five nursery overseers and three veterinary officers.

The department maintains an experimental station and three nurseries. Supplies of selected strains of seed are issued to cultivators annually and the nurseries provide budded fruit trees, available to the public at a nominal charge, and also seedlings for the use of the Department of Lands in forestry work.

Amongst its other duties of control of disease and pests, the department undertakes the technical supervision of control measures against the periodical invasion of Transjordan by desert locusts.

21. In Transjordan, the Department of Lands is responsible for all forestry work which has consisted, so far, of saving the remains of the ancient forests of pine and evergreen oak in the northern part of Transjordan from complete destruction at the hands of the local populace.

In the course of land settlement operations 178,230 acres of land had been registered as Government forest reserves by the end of 1946. Of this area 20 per cent. consists of thick forest, 6 per cent. is well timbered, 12 per cent. contains scattered trees and 62 per cent. is scrub land. Re-forestation has been restricted so far by the difficulty of obtaining fencing material.

The exploitation of the forests for firewood and local agricultural implements is effected under the supervision of the forestry staff of the Department.

22. The financing of the cultivators is undertaken for the most part by the village moneylender, who usually combines that function with those of shopkeeper and small-holder cultivator on his own account. There exists an Agricultural Bank with a capital of about £P.100,000 for the express purpose of assisting farmers but so restricted a capital cannot satisfy more than a small percentage of the needs of the country. This bank is an autonomous institution controlled by a board of which the members are appointed by the Transjordan Government, its capital is raised by

its own profits and an annual contribution of £P. 3,500 from Transjordan Government revenues.

Generally speaking the condition of the cultivator is one of chronic indebtedness, due principally to his own improvidence, but this state of affairs has not yet led to the accumulation by the moneylenders of large estates.

The total value of mortgages registered with the Department of Lands at the end of 1946 was £P. 681,348.

23. One of the most valuable reforms effected since Transjordan was detached from the Ottoman Empire in 1918 has been land settlement, which was commenced in 1933 and should be completed in about six years from now. Prior to this settlement about half of the cultivable land of Transjordan was held on a communal basis and a villager did not own a specific plot of land but a share in the land of the village as a whole which was redistributed periodically to the entire exclusion of any incentive to invest work and money in improvements. In settlement, shares were translated into a plot or plots of land which became the property of the individual.

Settlement also resulted in an accurate land registry, which never existed before, including records and maps of all private holdings of land in Transjordan.

#### Industries

24. As stated in the opening section of this despatch, industries in the usual sense of the word hardly exist in Transjordan, but there are a large number of artisans such as carpenters, blacksmiths, tanners, mechanics, shoemakers, weavers, &c., who operate on a purely family basis, the skill being taught by one generation to another. No statistics as to their number, output and earnings are available.

25. Two tobacco factories operate at Amman with a total average annual output of 120,000 kilog. of cigarettes and 2,500 kilog. of cut tobacco.

The excise duty collected on cigarettes is 500 mils (10s.) a kilog. and that on cut tobacco 350 mils (7s.) a kilog.

Three distilleries operate in the Belqa district with a total average annual output of 20,000 litres of brandy, 50,000 litres of arak and 5,000 litres of wine.

The excise duty collected on liquors is 67 mils (1s. 4d.) a litre on brandy and arak and 12 mils (3d.) a litre on wine.

26. The only active mining undertaken in Transjordan has been the exploitation

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on a small scale of the vast quantities of raw phosphates of exceptional high grade which are present. The principal difficulty in developing this potentially valuable asset is the expense of transporting so low priced a mineral to anything but a local market.

A Transjordan company obtained a lease of several deposits and has exported to Palestine an annual average of 5,000 tons of raw phosphate during the last five years to be converted to superphosphate for local use. Whether it will be possible to continue to market this mineral at a profit after the present high prices fall through competition from abroad remains to be seen. The price of the raw phosphate f.o.r at the mine head was about £P.4 a ton.

War time needs and prices also enabled Transjordan to sell to Palestine quantities of kaolin, ochre, hematite ore and silica sand. Here again the costs of transport make the continued exploitation of these mineral deposits problematical.

Oil mining has not yet reached the exploration stage although a number of concerns have applied for prospecting permits.

27. Attempts to develop an organised industry out of the individual efforts of the local fishermen at Aqaba have not yet succeeded but some Amman businessmen still persist in the attempt. On the 4th December, 1946, they purchased the fisheries installations established in Transjordan territory at Aqaba by the Palestine Government as a wartime undertaking to supplement the food supply of Palestine.

28. The milling of grain in Transjordan is effected by some 120 small power driven stone-mills, supplemented by a lesser number of water driven stone-mills of a primitive type. A modern roller mill is in process of erection at Amman and should be in operation about the middle of 1947.

29. There are five concessions operative in Transjordan:—

The Palestine Electric Corporation's	Concession.
The Dead Sea	Concession.
The Iraq Petroleum Company's	Pipe-line Concession.
The Anglo-Iranian	Pipe-line Concession.
The Trans-Arabian	Pipe-line Concession.

For political reasons, the Palestine Electric Corporation has not been able to market electric energy in Transjordan

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although the main power-house is situated on Transjordan territory.

The concession for the extraction of minerals from the Dead Sea held by the Palestine Potash Limited covers Transjordan as well as Palestine, but, as the whole of the manufacturing and marketing of the minerals is undertaken in Palestine, apart from a few drying pans which are situated just inside the Transjordan frontier, it cannot be termed a Transjordan industry.

The Transjordan Government, however, shares on an equal basis with the Palestine Government any royalties or profits paid or earned by the enterprise.

The Iraq Petroleum Company completed their pipe-line in 1937 and are now in the process of doubling the pipes. Although the concession was granted to the Anglo-Iranian Petroleum Company in 1935, the pipe-line was never constructed. The concession to the Trans-Arabian Pipe-line Company was granted a few months ago and construction has not commenced.

### Transport

30. The only railway in Transjordan is a section of the 105-cm gauge Hejaz Railway which crosses the Transjordan-Syrian frontier in the north at Nassib and crosses the Transjordan-Saudi Arabian frontier in the south at Kalat el Mudawwara. Of this section only 323 kilom. between Nassib and Ma'an are serviceable. The section from Ma'an to Mudawwara is derelict and part of the permanent way was moved in 1941 to build a military line between Ma'an and Nagb el Shtar, the latter place being on the edge of the scarp on the road to Aqaba, 43 kilom. south-west of Ma'an. This military line, which is still serviceable, was, in fact, never used.

Appendix B(1) to this report shows the passenger and goods traffic on the Transjordan section of the Hejaz Railway during 1946. The volume of traffic was adversely affected by the sabotage of a bridge in the Wadi Yarmuk in June 1946, which prevented through traffic from Palestine to Transjordan.

For strategic reasons, this railway was built by the Ottoman Government through the uncultivable part of Transjordan and, in consequence, its value to the transport system of the country is not great. Owing to the derelict state of the line south of Ma'an, as far as the terminus at Medina,

(1) Not printed.

the railway no longer plays the rôle for which it was built, that of transporting pilgrims to the Hejaz.

31. The only port possessed by Transjordan is Aqaba, a town which assumed transient importance during the two world wars but which relapsed into stagnation as soon as they were over. During 1941 the British army built a lighter basin here and made preparations designed to deal with about 600 tons of stores a day. The need for the use of Aqaba for supply purposes did not, however, arise.

During peace time, the port of Aqaba is used by a few fishing boats and by dhows from the Red Sea with cargoes of various local products.

In 1943, the Palestine Government built a modern fisheries in order to supplement the food supplies of Palestine. This installation was sold to a local company in the autumn of 1946.

Any development of Aqaba port is dependent on the provision of adequate road communication with the interior.

32. There are three asphalted main roads in Transjordan. In the north, the Haifa-Bagdad road which crosses from Palestine at Jisr Majami and passes into Iraqi territory some 60 kilom. east of H.4 Pumping Station.

In the centre of the country the Jerusalem-Amman road enters Transjordan at the Allenby bridge.

A third asphalt road connects Amman with Mafrak on the Haifa-Bagdad road.

For the rest, all towns and large villages are joined by a system of dry weather tracks, which are impassable for motor traffic for long periods during the winter months.

In 1941, the British army built an asphalt road from the railhead at Nagb el Shtar, south-west of Ma'an, to Aqaba, but subsequent floods have washed away the asphalt surface for the greater part of its length and the route is now one of the dry weather system.

33. The Royal Air Force have landing grounds at Amman, Mafrak, Ma'an and Aqaba and civil aircraft may use these places on payment of landing fee. It is only at Amman, however, where ground services are available.

A civil aviation concern financed by local capital operates from Transjordan under the title of the Arab Airways Association. Its aircraft are based in a station which has been erected on some five acres of land which it has leased from the Royal Air

Force at Amman. The Association possess four eight-seater De Havilland Rapides.

The Middle Eastern Airways of Beirut operate a regular service to and from Amman.

34. There is no organised animal transport in Transjordan and the country is dependent largely for the movement of passengers and merchandise on motor traffic.

The total number of motor vehicles registered at the end of 1946 was: passenger cars 679, of which 53 were British and 584 American; and 523 trucks, of which 16 were British and 471 American.

The motor transport trade is not organised efficiently and consists in normal times of a number of under-financed companies indulging in cut-throat competition.

### State Undertakings and Public Utilities

35. The Department of Posts and Telegraphs has its headquarters at Amman, with branch post offices at Aqaba, Ma'an, Tafleh, Kerak, Madeba, Es Salt, Zerqa, Jerash, Ajlun, Mafrak and Irbid. It also keeps a number of postal agencies in the more important villages.

The telephone system consists of a 600-number central battery exchange at Amman, with smaller magneto exchanges at branch post offices. Direct trunk telephone connexions exist between Amman and Jerusalem and between Amman and Damascus. Telephone communications with Egypt, Iraq and the Lebanon pass through the Palestine system.

Existing telephone facilities fall short of the public demand, and the expansion of all exchanges is under consideration.

36. The Palestine Electric Corporation's concession dated 5th March, 1926, gives to that company a monopoly for the generation of electric energy for sale over the whole of Transjordan except the municipal areas of Amman, Es Salt and Kerak. The company is regarded as being a Jewish concern and, for that reason, it has not been able, as yet, to market any electric power in Transjordan, purely on account of the refusal of the people to buy.

Amman is electrified by a local company which is now in the course of modernising its system with material and equipment from the United Kingdom. A number of private generating sets exist in various parts of the country, but the terms of the monopoly preclude their electricity from being sold.

37. All organised water supplies in Transjordan are owned and operated by

the local municipal councils. They exist at Amman, Irbid, Kerak, Es Salt and Zerqa.

38. The hospitalisation provided for the public by the Transjordan Government consists of twenty-six beds at Amman and twelve beds at Irbid. Government out-patient clinics exist at all administrative centres.

Private hospitals are maintained at Amman and Kerak by the National Society for the Assistance of Italian Missionaries, at Es Salt by the Church Missionary Society, and at Ajlun by a private Protestant group. In addition, some local practitioners have a few beds for in-patients at their clinics.

39. The schools maintained by the Transjordan Government consisted of four secondary schools for boys, fifty-four elementary schools for boys and nine for girls, one desert school for nomads, and one arts and crafts school. The numbers of teachers and pupils at these schools were 193 and 9,489 respectively at the end of 1946.

There were seventy-one private schools for boys, twenty for girls, and fourteen schools admitting boys and girls. These private schools employed 232 teachers and taught 6,477 pupils.

### Social

40. No statistics of employment and unemployment can be provided in respect of Transjordan. During 1946, however, unemployment did not exist and unskilled labour was in short supply at a wage of about 500 mils a day except during the cereal harvest when the daily rate of payment rose to the unprecedented height of £P.1. Semi-skilled labour was in even greater demand and obtained remuneration at rates which would have been deemed fantastic prior to 1939.

41. Although legislation existed for the registration and regulation of trade unions, no such unions were organised in Transjordan and the few minor disputes which have arisen during the recent years between labour and employers have been composed without difficulty by the District Administration.

Transjordan has yet to enact modern legislation on social-labour questions such as workmen's compensation, insurance against unemployment, &c., but effect is given by the local courts to the provisions of the Ottoman Civil Code and the Sharia' Moslem Law, neither of which entirely



neglect the questions of relationship between the employer and the employed.

42. No indices of prices and cost of living can be provided from official sources but, generally speaking, the cost of living during the war and afterwards followed approximately the same level as that in Palestine, local produce being slightly cheaper than in Palestine and manufactured goods slightly more expensive.

43. Particulars available of the number of inhabitants in Transjordan are given in the first part of this report. The total is about 470,000. Births and deaths registered with the Department of Public Health during 1946 were 14,799 and 5,812 respectively; these figures are probably incomplete

I have, &c.

A. KIRKBRIDE.

E 3116/3116/93

No. 24

### IRAQI-TRANSJORDAN TREATY OF ALLIANCE

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 14th April)*

(No. 121) *Amman,*  
(Telegraphic) *12th April, 1947.*

Regent of Iraq has arrived in Amman with Nuri Pasha and Shakir el Wadi bringing draft of a treaty of brotherhood and alliance between Iraq and Transjordan. The present intention is that Nuri Pasha and Samir Rifai should fly to Bagdad on Sunday in order that signature of the treaty should take place there.

2. The following are provisions of draft articles in brief:—

First clause: Permanent brotherhood and alliance and periodical consultations as to the manner in which the objects of the treaty are to be secured.

Second clause: Undertaking not to enter into agreements with a third party on any matter injurious to the interests of the other party to the treaty.

Third clause: Dispute between the two parties to be settled by friendly negotiations.

Fourth clause: If either country is involved in a dispute with a third party likely to lead to war, the two parties will undertake united effort to settle such a dispute by peaceful means and in accordance with appropriate international instruments.

Fifth clause: (a) If in spite of their efforts under article 4 an act of aggression is committed by a third party against one of the parties to the treaty, including an unforeseen attack which precludes the application of article 4, the two parties will consult as to means of repelling the aggressor.

(b) The term aggression covers a declaration of war, the occupation of territory by armed forces of a third party without a declaration of war, an attack by forces of a party to the treaty without a declaration of war, and direct or indirect support or assistance to an aggressor.

(c) The resort to measures of self-defence, or, in other words, resistance to an act of aggression as described above, shall not itself be deemed to be an act of aggression. Action undertaken to execute a decision of the United Nations shall not be deemed to be an act of aggression.

Sixth clause: (a) If internal disturbances take place in territory of one party, the other party shall—

(1) Take all possible steps to prevent its territory being used by the insurgents;

(2) To prevent its subjects participating with or assisting or managing [*sic*] the insurgents.

(3) Prevent any direct or indirect assistance reaching the insurgents from its territory.

(b) Insurgents who take refuge in territory of the other party shall be disarmed and surrendered.

(c) The two parties shall consult as to method of co-operation to be adopted if joint measures are necessary in order to suppress internal disturbances.

Seventh clause: The two parties shall co-operate in unification of their military methods by exchange of military missions to acquire information on such methods

and to benefit from military instructions and training.

Eighth clause: If required, diplomatic and consular representatives of either party may represent the interests of the other party in countries in which the latter is not represented. This does not affect the freedom of either party to appoint its own representatives.

Ninth clause: Special permanent committee, possessing executive powers, consisting of representatives of both kingdoms, shall be appointed to ensure co-operation between the two parties in all matters referred to in article 2 of the Covenant of the Arab League, and to give effect to articles 5, 6 and 7 of this treaty.

Tenth clause: Provides that nothing in this treaty shall affect the rights or obliga-

tions of either party under treaties with other States.

Eleventh clause: Provides for ratification.

Twelfth clause: Provides for ten years' duration with an automatic renewal for five-year periods unless notification is given by either party to the contrary.

Text of the treaty may be revised at expiration of any period in order to enforce closer co-operation or to strengthen the alliance.

Reference is made in the preamble to the fact that the treaty is concluded in accordance with the terms of article 9 of the Covenant of the Arab League.

3. (As this information has only just been given me and Samir Pasha is leaving Sunday for Bagdad, I am not delaying its transmission for my comments.)

E 3239/3116/93

No. 25

### IRAQI-TRANSJORDAN TREATY

*Sir H. Stonehewer Bird to Mr. Bevin. (Received 16th April)*

(No. 352) *Bagdad,*  
(Telegraphic) *16th April, 1947.*

Iraqi Government have signed treaty with Transjordan. Minister for Foreign Affairs assures me that text is identical with Iraqi-Saudi Treaty, with one new

article providing for the establishment of mixed committees to study problems of common interest (education, customs, &c.).

2. Text has not yet been published, but I have been promised a copy privately.

E 3812/2713/80

No. 26

### TRANSJORDAN: REVISED SYSTEM OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

*Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 8th May)*

(No. 42) *Amman, 30th April, 1947*  
Sir,

I have the honour to refer to my despatch No. 23 (178/Sec.) of 27th July, 1946, on the subject of the system of elections for membership of the Legislative Council.

2. The change from a two-stage election to a single-stage election which was anticipated in the final paragraph of my despatch under reference has been effected sooner than I expected. I enclose<sup>(1)</sup> herewith the English translation of an ordinance dated the 5th April, 1947, which was passed by the Council of Ministers and approved by the King, providing for the election of the members of the Council of

Representatives under the new Constitution of Transjordan. This ordinance will come before the legislature for confirmation in due course.

3. The following are the changes of importance introduced by the new legislation:—

(a) The inclusion of close relationship to the King amongst the disqualifications of voters.

(b) The increase of the number of elected representatives on the legislature from sixteen to twenty.

(c) The increase of the number of electoral areas from four to nine.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.



(d) Provision for the election of the Council of Representatives by a single stage.

4. Under the old system of dividing the country into four electoral areas, the councillors returned tended to residents of the most important urban centre of their area. Under the new division the representation of the more remote rural districts will be ensured.

The odd grouping of certain Qadas (sub-districts) with Qasabats (townships) which are situated in other sub-districts is to facilitate the election of the representatives of communal and religious minorities whose presence continues to be provided for specifically.

While the numbers of Circassian and Bedouin Councillors remain unchanged, the Moslem Arab and Christian Arab Councillors increase in number while retaining their old ratio of three to one.

5. The decision to introduce a single-

stage election was due to a considerable extent to events in Syria, where the question has been a political issue of some importance and where the agitation for a single-stage election has been accompanied by demonstrations and acts of violence. There was a feeling in Transjordan that anything for which people strove so actively in Syria must be a good thing although the precise benefits of the change were not clearly evident here.

6. Under the new Constitution the legislature will consist of a nominated Council of Notables of ten and an elected Council of Representatives of twenty as compared with the previous Legislative Council of six *ex officio* and sixteen elected members.

It will be seen, therefore, that while the number of elected councillors has increased, their proportion of the whole legislature has decreased.

I have, &c.

A. KIRKBRIDE.

E 3689/3116/93

No. 27

## IRAQI-TRANSJORDAN TREATY OF BROTHERHOOD AND ALLIANCE

### Speech by Iraqi Foreign Minister

*Sir H. Stonehewer-Bird to Mr. Bevin. (Received 9th May)*

(No. 134)

Bagdad,

23rd April, 1947

Sir, With reference to Amman telegram to you No. 121 of 12th April, which summarised the provisions of the draft Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance between Iraq and Transjordan, I now forward a translation of the treaty as signed in Bagdad on 14th April.

2. In announcing to Parliament the signature of the treaty, the Iraqi Foreign Minister spoke as follows:—

"In view of the ties of brotherhood and racial relations existing between Iraq and the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan, I am very glad to announce to the High Assembly the news of the registration of these ties and relations in the shape of a Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance between Iraq and the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan, on the basis of articles 2 and 9 of the Covenant of the League of Arab States and on the lines of the Treaty of Alliance and Brotherhood concluded between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Kingdom of Yeman. After carrying out

negotiations which terminated this morning I signed this treaty in the name of the Iraqi Government at 10 o'clock this morning. It was also signed by his Excellency Samir al Rifa'i Pasha, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan.

"This treaty will be submitted to your High Assembly for ratification. I do not wish to enter into its details, which will be made known to your High Assembly and the Iraqi people in the near future.

"I only wish to say most frankly and assuredly that it will put a final end to the malicious reports and calumniations of intriguers concerning the rumours spread about it that it will involve Iraq in financial and military undertakings.

"In this connexion I wish to point out that the policy being pursued by Iraqi Governments in their relations with sister Arab States is a policy of construction and co-operation based on brotherhood and exchange of interests in execution of the principles of the Covenant of the League of Arab States."

3. It will be seen that the treaty follows very closely the text of the treaty concluded between Iraq and Saudi Arabia in 1936. In fact, many of the clauses are textually identical. The only important difference is article 9, which provides for the appointment of permanent committees with executive powers, especially in regard to articles 5, 6 and 7, which relate to military institutions and defence. This article might be held to envisage the setting up of a Joint Defence Council for Iraq and Transjordan. I will report to you in due course any steps which may be taken to implement it. (It is perhaps significant that the Regent, on his visit to Amman, which preceded the drafting of the treaty, was accompanied not only by Nuri Pasha but by his Minister for Defence.)

4. The treaty has aroused no enthusiasm and much criticism here. It is felt, I have little doubt correctly, that it has been foisted on Iraq by King Abdullah, before whom the Regent, with the connivance of Nuri Pasha, weakly gave way. The treaty will probably arouse resentment in Syria and Saudi Arabia, and I have done my best to induce the Iraqi Government to emphasise to the representatives of those countries that there is no evil intent.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch, with enclosures, to His Majesty's representatives in Angora, Amman, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Jedda, Jerusalem and British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

HUGH STONEHEWER-BIRD.

Enclosure in No. 27

[Translation]

In the Name of God the Merciful the Compassionate

*Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance between the Kingdom of Iraq and the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan*

His Majesty the King of Iraq, and his Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan:

In view of the brotherly ties and racial unity binding them, desirous of safeguarding the integrity of their territories, having regard to the necessity which they feel for close co-operation and complete understanding in regard to matters affecting the interests of their kingdoms, and in execu-

tion of article 9 of the Charter of the League of Arab States, have agreed to conclude a Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance, and for this purpose have appointed as their plenipotentiaries:—

His Majesty the King of Iraq—

His Excellency Dr. Saiyid Muhammad Fadhil al Jamali, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

His Majesty the King of the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan—

His Excellency Sameer Pasha al Rifa'i, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Who, having reciprocally communicated their full powers found in due form, have entered into an alliance and have concluded the following treaty:—

### ARTICLE 1

There shall be perpetual ties of brotherhood and alliance between the Kingdom of Iraq and the Hashimite Kingdom of Transjordan, and the two high contracting parties shall consult together when necessary with a view to furthering the objects set forth in the preamble to this treaty.

### ARTICLE 2

Each of the high contracting parties reciprocally undertakes not to enter with any third party into any understanding or agreement over any matter whatever of a nature prejudicial to the interests of the other high contracting party or to his country or its interests, or of a nature calculated to expose to danger or harm the safety or interests of his country.

### ARTICLE 3

The high contracting parties undertake to settle any dispute arising between them by means of friendly negotiations.

### ARTICLE 4

Should any dispute between either high contracting party and a third State produce a situation involving a threat of war, in that case the high contracting parties shall jointly endeavour to settle such dispute by peaceful means in accordance with such international pledges as may be applicable to the case.

### ARTICLE 5

(a) In the event of an act of aggression being committed against either high contracting party by a third State, notwithstanding efforts exerted in accordance with the provisions of article 4 above, and



similarly in the event of the occurrence of a sudden act of aggression which does not leave time for the application of the provisions of article 4 above, the high contracting parties shall consult together regarding the measures which should be taken to concert their efforts to repel and drive back such aggression.

(b) The following shall be deemed acts of aggression:—

- (1) The declaration of war.
- (2) The seizure, by an armed force of a third State, of territory belonging to either high contracting party, even without a declaration of war.
- (3) An attack on the territory, land, naval or air forces of either high contracting party by the land, naval or air forces of a third State, even without a declaration of war.
- (4) Direct or indirect support or assistance to the aggressor.

(c) The following shall not be deemed acts of aggression:—

- (1) The exercise of the right of legitimate defence, *i.e.*, resisting any act of aggression as defined above.
- (2) Action undertaken in enforcement of the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

#### ARTICLE 6

In the event of the outbreak of disturbances or disorders in the territory of one of the high contracting parties each of them undertakes reciprocally as follows:—

- (a) To take all possible arrangements or measures:—
- (1) To make it impossible for the insurgents to utilise his territory against the interests of the other high contracting party; and
- (2) To prevent his subjects from taking part in the disturbances or disorders or from helping or encouraging the insurgents; and
- (3) To prevent any kind of help being given to the insurgents either directly from his own country or otherwise.

(b) In the event of insurgents from the territory of one of the high contracting parties taking refuge in the territory of the other high contracting party, the latter shall disarm them and surrender them to the other party.

(c) If circumstances should necessitate the adoption of joint arrangements or

measures to suppress disturbances or disorders, the two high contracting parties shall consult with each other concerning the policy of co-operation which shall be followed for this purpose.

#### ARTICLE 7

The two high contracting parties will co-operate with a view to unifying the military systems of their two countries by means of the exchange of military missions to study the systems followed in their respective countries, and to seek to obtain benefit from their respective military institutions and the training and instruction which is available in them.

#### ARTICLE 8

The diplomatic or consular representatives of either high contracting party may, if requested, undertake the representation of the interests of the other high contracting party in foreign countries where such other party has no representatives.

This shall not in any way affect the freedom of such other party to appoint separate representatives of his own should he so desire.

#### ARTICLE 9

Special permanent committees with executive powers from representatives of the two kingdoms shall be appointed, the competence of which shall be to ensure and put into force actual co-operation between the two high contracting parties in all matters provided for in article 2 of the Charter of the League of Arab States, and also to carry out the requirements of the provisions of articles 5, 6 and 7 of this treaty.

#### ARTICLE 10

There is nothing in this treaty to contradict the rights and obligations arising from treaties with which each of the two high contracting parties is bound with any other State.

#### ARTICLE 11

This treaty shall come into force from the date on which its ratifications are exchanged.

#### ARTICLE 12

This treaty shall remain in force for a period of ten years from the date of its coming into force. It shall be deemed to have been renewed automatically for further periods of five years each unless notice of desire to terminate it shall have been given by either high contracting party to the other one year prior to the date of

expiry of its period. On the expiry of the first period, or any other following period of renewal, either high contracting party may demand the reconsideration and revision of this treaty for the purpose of furthering the co-operation and consolidating the alliance in a manner more than what is provided therein.

In confirmation whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present treaty and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at Bagdad, in duplicate, in Arabic, this 22nd day of Jamad al Awwal, 1366, corresponding to the 14th day of April, 1947.

E 4162/3116/93

No. 28

#### IRAQI-TRANSJORDAN TREATY

Sir H. Stonehewer Bird to Mr. Bevin. (Received 16th May)

(No. 499)

(Telegraphic)

Bagdad, 16th May, 1947.

Transjordan-Iraqi Treaty passed the Senate yesterday by 17 votes to 1. It had previously passed Chamber of Deputies by 87 to 2.

E 7202/3116/93

No. 29

#### TRANSJORDAN-IRAQ TREATY

Mr. Pirie-Gordon to Mr. Bevin. (Received 8th August)

(No. 80)

Amman,

28th July, 1947

I have the honour to refer to Sir Alec Kirkbride's despatch No. 37 of 15th April, 1947, and to enclose a copy<sup>(1)</sup> of No. 909 of the *Official Gazette* of the Transjordan Government containing the Arabic text of the Transjordan-Iraq Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance. I also enclose translation made by the legal and economic expert to the Transjordan Government.

2. I am sending a copy of this despatch together with a copy of the second enclosure to His Majesty's Ambassador at Bagdad.

I have, &c.

C. M. PIRIE-GORDON.

Enclosure in No. 29

#### *Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance between Transjordan and Iraq*

Hereunder is published the text of the Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance made at the city of Bagdad, on 22nd of Jemadil Aula 1366/14th April, 1947, between the Kingdoms of Transjordan and the Kingdom of Iraq, after ratification by both Governments.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

#### "ABDULLAH IBN EL HUSSEIN."

We, Abdullah Ibn El Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan,

Whereas the Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance was concluded between us and His Majesty the King of Iraq, and was signed in the City of Bagdad on 22nd day of Jemadil Aula 1366/14th April 1947, on our behalf by our Plenipotentiary his Excellency the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Samir Pasha El Rifa'i, and by the Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the King of Iraq Dr. sayed Mohd. Fadil El Jamali, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, duly authorised for this purpose, hereunder is the full text of the Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance:

#### *Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance between the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan and the Kingdom of Iraq.*

His Majesty the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan; His Majesty the King of Iraq;

In accordance with the brotherly relations and national unity that bind them, and for the sake of safeguarding their countries, and in accordance with the great necessity for close co-operation and full understanding between them regarding the affairs



relating to their kingdoms: and in execution of article 9 of the Arab League Charter, agreed to conclude a treaty of brotherhood and alliance between them and have appointed as their plenipotentiaries:—

His Majesty the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan:

His Excellency Samir Pasha El Rifa'i, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

His Majesty the King of Iraq:

His Excellency Dr. sayed Mohd. Fadil El Jamali, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Who, having communicated their full powers found in good and due form, have agreed on and concluded the following articles:—

#### ARTICLE 1

There shall be perpetual relations of Brotherhood and Alliance between the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan and the Kingdom of Iraq, and the high contracting parties shall consult each other when necessary for the execution of the object stated in the preamble hereof.

#### ARTICLE 2

Each of the high contracting parties undertakes not to make any understanding or agreement with a third party in respect of any matter detrimental to the interests of the other high contracting party or to his kingdom or which exposes the safety of his kingdom or its interests to danger or damage.

#### ARTICLE 3

The two high contracting parties undertake to settle all differences arising between them by friendly negotiations.

#### ARTICLE 4

Should a dispute arise between either of the high contracting parties and a third State which threatens the danger of war breaking out, the high contracting parties shall unify their efforts to seek a solution by peaceful means in accordance with the international undertakings applicable to the case.

#### ARTICLE 5

(a) In case of an aggression on either of the high contracting parties by a third

State in spite of the efforts exerted in accordance with the provisions of article 4 aforesaid, and also in case of a sudden aggression where there is no time to apply the provisions of article 4 aforesaid, the high contracting parties will concert together the necessary measures to consolidate their efforts to oppose such aggression.

(b) The following shall be regarded as acts of aggressions:—

- (1) Declaration of war.
- (2) The occupation by a third State by its armed forces of the territory of either of the high contracting parties even without a declaration of war.
- (3) The attack by a third State by its land, sea or air forces on the country of either of the high contracting parties or its land, sea or air forces even without a declaration of war.
- (4) The help or support of the aggressor directly or indirectly.

(c) The following shall not be regarded as acts of aggression:—

- (1) The right of legal defence, i.e., of resisting any action of aggression as defined above.
- (2) Actions carried out in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations.

#### ARTICLE 6

In the case of disturbances or riots in the country of either of the high contracting parties both shall undertake reciprocal action:—

(a) The measures or actions to be taken:—

- (1) To prevent the rebels from using its territory against the other high contracting party.
- (2) To prevent its people from taking part in the disturbances or riots or found helping or encouraging the rioters.
- (3) To prevent any kind of help from reaching the rioters through its country directly or indirectly.

(b) If the rioters seek shelter in the territory of either of the high contracting parties, the high contracting parties shall disarm and hand them over to the other party.

(c) If the case requires joint proceedings or measures to settle these disturbances or riots, both high contracting parties shall

consult together on the method of co-operation which should be adopted for this purpose.

#### ARTICLE 7

The high contracting parties shall co-operate as for the unification of the military methods in their countries by the exchange of military missions for the study of the military methods adopted in both Kingdoms and for benefiting from the military schools and the training therein.

#### ARTICLE 8

The diplomatic and consular representatives of each of the high contracting parties shall represent the affairs of the other party when this is requested in foreign countries where such party is not represented.

But, this shall not be inconsistent with the freedom of such party from appointing independent representatives if he so desires.

#### ARTICLE 9

Permanent special committees with executive powers shall be appointed from representatives of both kingdoms, the jurisdiction of which shall be to make and execute co-operation in fact between both high contracting parties regarding all affairs specified in article 2 of the Arab League Charter, and also to execute the provisions of articles 5, 6 and 7 of this treaty.

#### ARTICLE 10

Nothing in this treaty is inconsistent with the rights and duties arising from treaties by which either of the high contracting parties is bound with another State.

#### ARTICLE 11

This treaty shall be in force as from the date of the exchange of the instruments of ratification.

#### ARTICLE 12

This treaty shall remain in force for a period of ten years from the date of its coming into force. If either of the high contracting parties does not inform the other party of his desire to terminate the same one year before its expiration, it shall be considered to be automatically renewed for further periods each of five years.

Either high contracting party at the expiration of the first period or at a subsequent period of the periods of renewal may request the re-consideration and the amendment of the treaty for the purpose of increasing the co-operation and strengthening the alliance to a greater extent than was therein provided.

and in confirmation whereof, the said delegates plenipotentiary have signed this treaty and sealed it with their seals.

Written at Bagdad in duplicate in Arabic 22nd day of Jemadil Aula 1366/14th April, 1947.

After perusal and consideration of the said Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance, We have agreed and confirmed its contents article by article and paragraph by paragraph and therefore We by this instrument declare Our consent to the same and confirm its execution by Us and on behalf of Our Heirs and Successors, undertaking and promising to carry it out loyally and faithfully: and We also undertake and promise that We will not as far as it is within Our power allow any breach at all of any articles or part thereof by any body whatsoever in any way.

Having confidence in the correctness of the treaty and authenticating the signature of Our Plenipotentiary, We ordered this instrument to be sealed and We signed it with Our Hashemite Hand.

Written at Our Raghadan Palace the 27th day of Jemadil Akhira, 1366/17th of May, 1947.

By order of His Majesty the King,  
SAMIR EL RIFA'I,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs.

*Execution of the Transjordan-Iraqi Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance*

As the exchange of the decisions of ratification of the Treaty of Brotherhood and Alliance between Transjordan and Iraq has been completed on the 22nd of Rajab, 1366/10th June, 1947, in accordance with the duly signed documents, it is hereby declared that this treaty, as provided in article 11 thereof, is in force as from the said date.

MOHD. ABBASS,  
Acting Prime Minister.

10th June, 1947.



# FUTURE OF THE ARAB LEGION

Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 30th October)

(No. 321)  
(Telegraphic)

Amman,  
29th October, 1947.

Your telegram No. 470 about Palestine. Treatment of Arab Legion, if and when we evacuate Palestine, should be considered in connexion with the general policy of His Majesty's Government of arranging mutual defence of the Middle East with armed forces of various Arab States. Co-operation between His Majesty's forces and Arab Legion has been of the closest, and at one time appeared to be a model of what mutual defence arrangements between a small country and a great Power should be. To take steps to cripple this tactical force because there is some prospect of its taking action in a matter in which His Majesty's Government will no longer be directly concerned will be a poor advertisement of our policy.

2. Another parallel point I wish to make is that Transjordan should not be penalised for being an ally of Great Britain if as may well be the case there is a general scramble for Arab areas of Palestine as a result of our abandoning the mandate and marching out. It would not be logical for Great Britain to leave a vacuum in Palestine and then to try and direct Transjordan's subsequent reactions. I realise the counter to this argument is that our ties with Transjordan are so close that we will be credited with some of the responsibility for what Transjordan does. I submit that this is part of the price which must be paid for such an alliance, and that too much attention should not be paid to criticism from other less friendly quarters.

3. Manner in which we treat the problems concerning the Arab Legion must to some extent depend on how Transjordan authorities [group undecipherable] the use of that force. As far as I can judge King Abdullah may act, possibly independently of other Arab States, to forestall the Mufti if we leave a vacuum in Palestine. I consider it unlikely that he would move against any international authority which might replace us in Palestine, except as part of a concerted plan of the Arab League and under pressure from that quarter.

4. I agree that as we imported Arab Legion units to Palestine it would be

reasonable for us to secure their withdrawal across the frontier before we left, but I am not clear as to why we should then cease to pay for them unless it is considered that the present payments do not constitute subsidy which is provided for in article 8 of annex to the treaty. Our obligation regarding the cost of the armed forces of Transjordan is not conditional on where they serve and if your view is that the present payments are not [group undecipherable] subsidy, then presumably financial assistance under article 8 would commence where they left off.

5. It would not appear that subsidy could be withheld because Transjordan sent the Arab Legion back into Palestine after our withdrawal. Terms of [group undecipherable] : ? article 10 of] annex relate to payments to article 5 of the treaty and it is tentatively suggested that His Majesty's Government are entitled to withhold financial assistance because of some difference of opinion with Transjordan in some other sphere. Withdrawal of British officers seconded to the Arab Legion would not immobilise that force as there is an alternative source of supply of Arabs, and some British personnel are employed in training by Transjordan Government. Although it has not been discussed with me, I believe that this month's withdrawal of British officers has been envisaged by the Transjordan Government and that in such an event vacancies would be filled immediately by Iraqi army personnel. This step would bring the Arab Legion directly under the control of the Iraqi army and quite outside our influence. Incidentally the undertaking of His Majesty's Government to provide British officers given in article 9 of the annex seems to be unconditional.

6. My own view which I have been at pains to conceal from the King and Samir is that strategically and economically Transjordan has best claim to inherit residue of Palestine and that occupation of the Arab areas by Transjordan would counteract the chances of armed conflict between a Jewish State and other Arab States, in particular Iraq which I hold to be the most dangerous. As I have indicated in my telegram No. 310, paragraph 5, King Abdullah

would be prepared to acquiesce in formation of a Jewish State provided Transjordan obtained the rest of Palestine, I see no signs of such an attitude of mind on the part of other Arab leaders. A greater Transjordan would not be against our interests, it might be in their favour, so even if we are not prepared to help I see no reason why we should place obstacles in the way of Transjordan. Alternative of a non-viable Palestine Arab State under the Mufti is not attractive. Anti-Hashimite

Arab States would no doubt blame us for what had happened, but as they already blame us for almost everything the situation would not be abnormal.

7. I will speak to the King in the sense of paragraph 2 of your telegram, but when he talks of consultation he has more than this in mind. In particular he would like guidance, but I realise, of course, that it is probably impossible for His Majesty's Government to give him any.

# OPENING OF THE TRANSJORDAN PARLIAMENT

## Speech from the Throne

Sir A. Kirkbride to Mr. Bevin. (Received 21st November)

(No. 113)  
Sir,

Amman,  
10th November, 1947

I have the honour to refer to my despatch No. 110 of 30th October, 1947, and to report that, in accordance with the new Constitution of Transjordan, the Transjordan Parliament, consisting of a Council of Notables and a Council of Representatives, was opened by King Abdullah on 1st November, 1947. A translation of the Speech from the Throne is enclosed herewith.

2. The new Parliament is housed in a building which was originally constructed, with some financial assistance from the British Council, as new quarters for the King Hussein Club of Amman. The scheme proved, however, to be too ambitious for the finances of the club, which was glad to lease it to the Transjordan Government for its present purpose.

After some minor adaptations the result was not without simple dignity or unworthy of the capital of a small State.

The Diplomatic and Consular Corps, together with past Ministers and other distinguished persons, were housed in a gallery.

3. For the first time for years past, the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the legislature made no reference to the Greater Syria scheme, a result which was not achieved without effort on the part of the Prime Minister and myself.

King Abdullah secured something of a come back in this connexion by getting the President of the Council of Representatives to insert in the reply to the Speech from the Throne a remark to the effect that

while the Council saw, with gratitude, that the case of Palestine was to be given priority of consideration, they trusted that the importance of reuniting all Arab countries, including Syria, would not be overlooked.

On the grounds that the remark was relatively innocuous and that it would not do to deprive the Council of its freedom of speech at its first meeting, I advised the Prime Minister against making a political crisis over this issue.

4. Abder Rahman Pasha Azzam was present and sat with members of the Royal Household after an attempt to place him at the head of the Diplomatic Corps had been overcome.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to the High Commissioner for Palestine and to His Majesty's representatives at Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus and Jedda and to the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c

A. S. KIRKBRIDE.

Enclosure in No. 31  
(Translation)

## Speech from the Throne

Honourable Notables and Deputies,

In the name of God and with the mention of the prophet of God, I open the first ordinary session of the nation's Parliament, in both its honourable sections, with gratitude, congratulations and hope for all success, prosperity and peace. With this



new appearance of true parliamentary life the nation is starting another lap in the course of advancement and success, and is making another step forward in independent and free life, after having acquired sovereignty and independence of which it was worthy.

This nation has every right to administer its own affairs, and to watch over its own interests, with the guidance of our magnificent and splendid past, especially when working for public welfare and for the good of the country and when advancing firmly, but with reason and wisdom, to the dignity and might that are sought by active and advanced nations.

I congratulate the honourable members on their success in securing their seat at this honourable Council; it is a high position well befitting them. I pray the Generous and Merciful God to render this year one of prosperity, comfort and grace; I pray that, through the medium of the greatest of the apostles, the country shall be enveloped with God's mercies and goodwill; I wish my people prosperity and blessings. I wish to thank my people and to mention with appreciation the patience and endurance which they have shown in the crisis in conformity with God's saying: "With somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and lives and fruits will we surely prove you but bear good tidings to the patient, who, when a mischance chanceth them, say we are God's, to Him shall we return. On them shall be blessing from their Lord and mercy and they are the rightly guided" (Sura II, the Cow, verses 150-152).

It is through thanksgiving that gifts are increased and through obedience of God and refraining from committing that which He prohibits that benevolences continue. I thank my Government, too, for the measures taken towards relieving the financial crisis, and for its full co-operation with the inhabitants, thereby ensuring that every one shall obtain whatever food and seeds to which he is entitled. I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to friendly Turkey, in the person of its great President, for responding to our call and for supplying us with the grain and animals we have asked for. This country will never forget the brotherly kindness and humanitarian assistance rendered by Turkey.

Notables and Deputies!

Our country has already started the life of independence and international fellow-

ship. It has tightened the ties of friendly relationship with friendly States and peoples. The Government has exchanged diplomatic representatives with those States which have good and strong connexions with your country. It is unnecessary to emphasise our brotherly loyalty to the States and covenant of the Arab League. We wish good for all and hope that fraternal relationships will be maintained. There shall be nothing but this, with God's help.

Your honourable Council has learnt of the visit paid to us by the delegates to the Arab League, therefore, we take this opportunity of stating that the case of Palestine takes at present the first place amongst the problems we are discussing. May God grant us success to achieve the best service we can offer to our nation and to the establishment of peace in this cherished region.

The honourable Council has learned, too, of Russia's attitude towards this country; it has exercised the right of veto in two successive years in order to prevent this kingdom from joining the United Nations Organisation. While we are greatly astonished at this unjustifiable attitude adopted by the Russian Government, we wish to state that we harbour nothing but wishes of happiness and prosperity for the Russian people. We feel thus for all the peoples of the world, with, however, the sincere desire to preserve our national qualities, Arab customs and Islamic rites.

Notables and Deputies!

During this first year of independence, and in spite of the critical situation, the Government has executed numerous and important enterprises and is still endeavouring to complete those outstanding. The Government has been able so to do through God's assistance as well as the generous support accorded by you and by the nation. We hope that in its next electoral term this honourable Council shall have the rights which will be the fruit of the wisdom and reason which it will show in the present term—a matter we have no doubt about its ability to achieve, with God's help.

In the field of foreign politics, Members, the Government strove to strengthen the pillars of independence and to establish the country's position in the family of nations. In the exchange of diplomatic representatives, the Government has opened such legations abroad as are necessary and

possible; it has reorganised the Trans-jordan Diplomatic Service and has completed the establishment of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs so as to meet requirements.

This year has witnessed the establishment in this Hashimite Kingdom of legations of the Turkish Republic, the Iraqi Kingdom, the Egyptian Kingdom, the Spanish Government, the Afghanistan Kingdom and the Kingdom of Greece. Negotiations continue for the establishment of diplomatic relations with a number of other Eastern and Western States. A treaty of friendship has been concluded with Turkey, a treaty of brotherhood and alliance was concluded with Iraq, and a temporary commercial agreement has also been concluded with the Government of Egypt.

Our Government has taken part in a number of international conferences, and we have exchanged visits with His Royal Highness the Regent of Iraq and have received at our capital His Royal Highness Amir Faisal Al Saoud.

In the internal field the Government activities were both numerous and effective. The drought and scarcity in the last agricultural season placed a heavy burden on the shoulders of the Government. It would not have been easy to overcome this crisis had it not been through God's mercy and through the measures taken. For this purpose, the Government has bought the surplus crop in the districts not affected by drought so as to provide seeds to the districts in need thereof. It has bought whatever cereals it could from abroad to supply the inhabitants with food. It has distributed to the inhabitants more than 3,700 tons of sugar as well as 400 tons of rice and 100 tons of tea, the cost of these commodities amounting to £P.250,000. The Government has arranged for importations of the necessary quantities of these commodities for the coming year. It has made large provision for relief works and engaged a large number of men in the construction, repair and improvement of roads throughout the kingdom. The Government has purchased eleven water-carriers which conveyed water to the labourers and inhabitants where water was exhausted. These relief works will continue until such a time when the shortage ends through God's permission. In addition to the foregoing assistance, and in order to enable the farmers in the districts affected by drought to resume farming in the coming season,

the Government has guaranteed a loan at low interest to the Agricultural Bank in the sum of £P.100,000 to be reimbursed after ten years. The Agricultural Bank was also granted another loan of £P.100,000 from the Treasury at no interest and for a period of fifteen years. The annual provision in the general budget to this bank has also been increased from £P.3,500 to £P.15,000. All these measures have made it possible for the bank to issue agricultural loans during this year amounting to approximately a quarter of a million of pounds. A branch bank was opened at Jerash with a capital of £P.20,000, and its activities will also include Ajloun district.

As regards finance, over £P.60,000 of taxes due for the present year have been remitted because of crop failure. Tax payers whose poverty has been ascertained have been exempted from payment of nearly £P.20,000 of arrears of taxes. To prevent the alienation of agricultural lands, the Government has promulgated an ordinance, which will be presented to your honourable Council, prohibiting the sale of the agricultural lands in settlement of debt for a period of two years. Notwithstanding the heavy burden caused to the country's finances by unfavourable circumstances, nevertheless the general budget remained unaffected, through God's mercy, and it was possible to balance revenue and expenditure, as will be seen when the yearly estimates to be presented to you.

A number of good works were carried out in the agricultural field. Officials of the Ministry of Agriculture were sent abroad to specialise in plant protection. A nursery was established at Aqaba on an area of 500 dunams to encourage the plantation of palm trees. This nursery will supply the population with approximately 20,000 seedlings. The locust invasion of the Balqa and Ajloun districts in the beginning of the year was controlled successfully, as was the field mice outbreak in villages in the Irbed and Balqa districts. In the districts affected by drought the Government postponed collection of the debts due by those who had borrowed improved seeds during the past years. Likewise, the refund of all grain borrowed during the present year was postponed where yield had been bad or medium. In addition, good quantities of selected seeds have been distributed.

As regards economic and commercial activities, I have to say that, in general,



commercial activity during this year was less than the past year. But in spite of this, customs revenues remained unaffected because of the arrival of goods which were ordered during the last year and the years before. The customs revenue during the last twelve months amounts to over £P.1 million, and the merchandise imported during the current year is equivalent to that imported during the past year. The agricultural products exported during this year were less than the past year, owing to drought. The Department of Import and Export has also opened credits in the sum of £P.4½ million for licensed imports. No doubt the arrival of the merchandise which has been ordered will result in a commercial revival in the country. The Government has concluded an agreement whereby exploration for oil may be carried out throughout the kingdom. Work has commenced, and if oil is found it will add to the country's revenue and enable advancement and prosperity to be achieved.

So far approximately half a million dunams of lands have been settled, and settlement works are still in progress to the south of Kerak and on the Beni Hassan lands. The work at the land registration offices has increased and revenue has grown accordingly. The development branch has carried on its activities by measuring the water flow in the principal valleys and rivers as well as the registration of rainfall. It is hoped that the enactment of the new Water Settlement Law will eliminate disputes over water and assist in the increase of yield in irrigated lands. The Government has employed an expert in irrigation, and has purchased a new machine for drilling artesian wells and another apparatus for exploration of water and has compiled valuable geological information. By means of these measures it will be possible to indicate the correct spots where artesian wells should be sunk, making possible large and permanent irrigation works and to irrigate large areas of new land. The forest section has established a nursery at Jerash. This nursery will supply the necessary seedlings for plantation in the areas reserved for the purpose.

As regards hygiene, we thank God that the country in general has enjoyed good health. Adequate measures have been taken against the introduction of certain diseases which have broken out in neighbouring countries. General vaccination against cholera has been commenced, and the

Ministry of Health has made praiseworthy efforts against malaria which appeared on a small scale when shortage of water compelled some of the population to live near springs and valleys. Successful efforts were also made to raise the surgical standard at the Government hospitals, and the land has been acquired whereon a tuberculosis hospital will be built.

In the field of education I am glad to say that secondary schools which were under establishment have now been brought up to standard by the addition of new classes. Educational missions were sent abroad to high educational centres, an improvement in the standard of teachers has been attained and some new schools were opened in the villages.

Many important antiquities were discovered in the country during this year, and arrangements have been made for the establishment of a museum as well as the construction in the next year of a new building for the Department of Antiquities.

A Sharia' Court was opened in Madaba District, and an ordinance has been made dealing with the family rights, in which was taken into consideration temporal needs of the day within the limits of religion law. The Awqaf Department has accomplished, within the limits of its jurisdiction, praiseworthy tasks. The Zaqat Fund has also rendered valuable assistance towards the relief of the needy persons. This fund has contributed greatly in the relief of the people affected by drought.

The Ministry of Communications has been active. It has formulated a scheme aiming for the execution of big development works, the realisation of which during the ensuing five years is necessary for the kingdom. This scheme provides for the improvement of land communications in the kingdom so as to render them capable of meeting the country's economic requirements and facilitate the utilisation of the kingdom's natural resources. The scheme provides, too, for the construction of buildings to accommodate Government departments, educational centres, schools, hospitals and dispensaries and so raise general hygienic and cultural standards as far as is possible. Unfavourable circumstances have not permitted the execution of the scheme this year, but it is hoped it will be done in the coming year with God's help. A new section has been introduced in the Ministry of Communications to supervise civil aviation. This section has been organised on a technical basis befitting the

increasing and growing importance that is being attached to this type of modern communications all over the world. The Ministry of Communications has attended the meeting of the technical committee which was appointed to study the repairs to the Hedjaz railway. We hope that the technical committee shall succeed in its work.

As regards postal and telegraphic communications, we would state that the kingdom became a member in the International Postal Union. The Ministry of Communications has arranged for an air service between our capital and the Lebanese capital. Telephonic service has been introduced between our kingdom and the United Kingdom, France and the United States. A new telephone exchange has been ordered and on arrival will assist the central exchange to meet the increasing demands for private telephones. In this connexion we are glad to announce the issue of special postage stamps in aid of the Arabs in Palestine in execution of the decision which was taken at the Conference of Inshass. We are also glad to announce the issue of stamps to commemorate this happy day in which we have opened the first Transjordan Parliament. These stamps will be put in use as from to-day.

Special attention has been paid to the affairs of our courageous army. The construction of Abdali camp having been completed, it is now a depot in which recruits are given first training and men instructed in the use of all types of modern armament. Military courses will be held at the Abdali camp for officers and n.c.o.s from all units of the army under instruction of capable and experienced officers. A military college has also been established where

secondary education will be provided in addition to military subjects. The purpose of the establishment of this college is to augment the soldierly spirit, thereby making of the college an important factor in the formation of an army with cultural and military education. Arrangements were made as well for opening an army hospital, which will be supervised by doctors efficient both in medicine and surgery. The land on which this hospital will be built has already been acquired.

This year has also witnessed execution of the reserve force scheme, which is considered to be a vital step in the history of the Transjordan Arab Legion. The legion is endeavouring to establish a special branch for construction and repair works under the name of "Engineering and Construction Section." This section will be responsible for the maintenance of the buildings of the legion as well as, police posts. It will also be called upon to carry out all the new constructions. The mechanical section has made an appreciable progress, special missions will be sent abroad continually for modern specialisation in this line. It is by means of God's grace as well as the population's appreciation and the ability of our brave army that the country has enjoyed remarkable security and peace.

Notables and Deputies!

Our Government will present to you all the draft laws drawn up in connexion with these tasks and measures. In the name of God the Omnipotent I open this first ordinary session of your honourable Council, calling upon you to begin work and wishing you success, and benedictions from the Generous and Merciful God.